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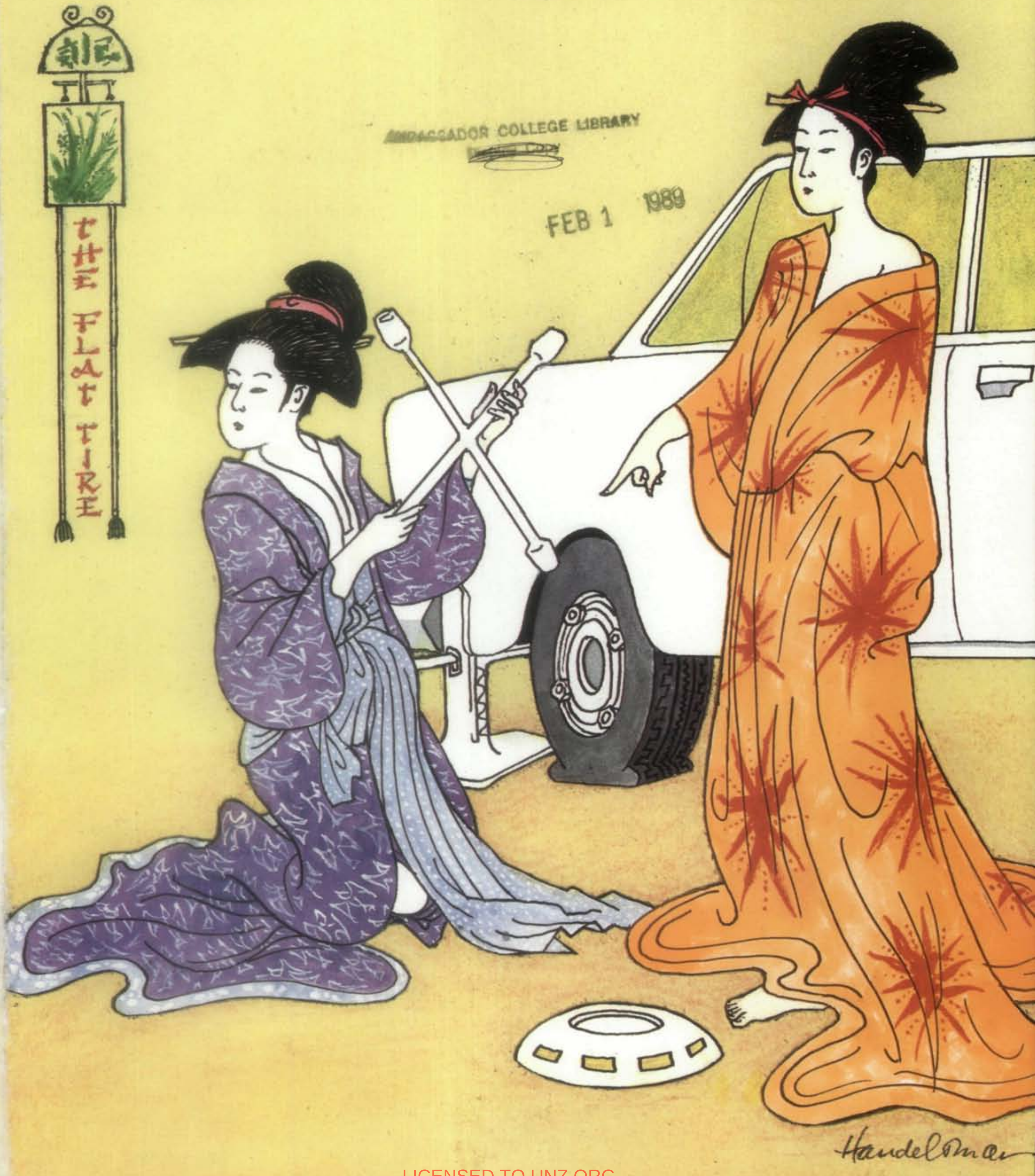
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FEBRUARY 6, 1989

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN 4

THE TALK OF THE TOWN 23

"UNO MÁS" . . . . *Wright Morris* 28

"THE SHADOW-LINE" (POEM) . . . . *William Logan* 30

"MONROE'S WEDDING" . . . . *John Holman* 32

"LUNAR FROST" (POEM) . . . . *Mary Kinzie* 34

PROFILES (ERROL MORRIS) . . . . *Mark Singer* 38

DANCING . . . . *Arlene Croce* 73

A REPORTER AT LARGE (BARBUDA) . . . . *Robert Coram* 76

"SALTING THE OATMEAL" (POEM) . . . . *Eleanor Ross Taylor* 94

THE CURRENT CINEMA . . . . *Pauline Kael* 95

THE THEATRE . . . . *Edith Oliver* 97

MUSICAL EVENTS . . . . *Andrew Porter* 98

BOOKS . . . . *George Steiner* 103

BRIEFLY NOTED 105

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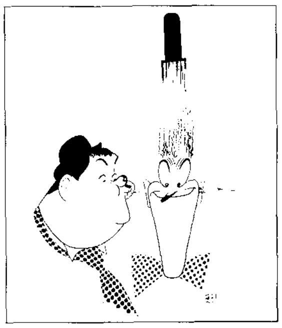

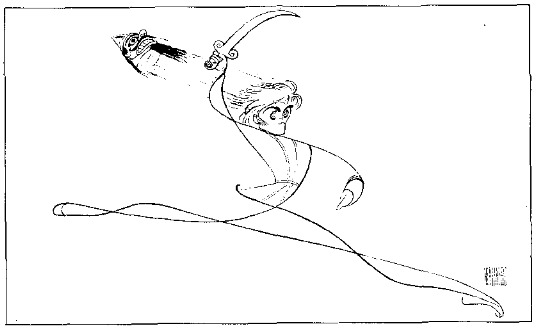

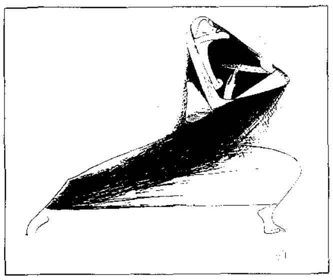

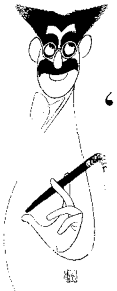

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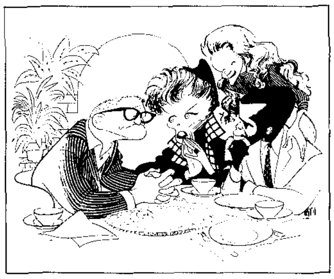

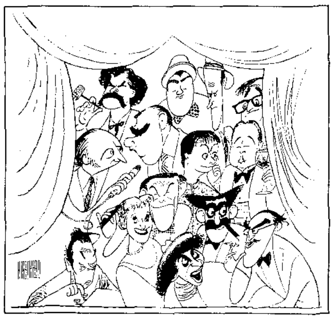

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Black and Blue—A revue of black-American music and dance, with a company of forty-one singers, dancers, and musicians. Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith are among the singers, and the dancers include Bunny Briggs, Ralph Brown, Lon Chaney, and Jimmy Slyde. (Reviewed in this issue, in "Dancing.") (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Born Yesterday—Edward Asner and Madeline Kahn in a revival of Garson Kanin's 1946 play. Directed by Josephine R. Abady. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Cocktail Hour—A dramatist returns to his native city in upstate New York to break the news to his prosperous family that he has written a play about them and to ask their permission to have it produced. More easily said than done. A. R. Gurney's humor has never been more sparkling, his characters never more convincing or engaging. The play is as sensitive as it is funny, and the actors do it full justice, under Jack O'Brien's direction. Nancy Marchand gives a marvellous performance as the hero's mother, and Holland Taylor, Bruce Davison, and Keene Curtis are fine, too. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/7/88.) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Devil's Disciple—A tame production of Shaw's dashing melodrama. (11/28/88) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

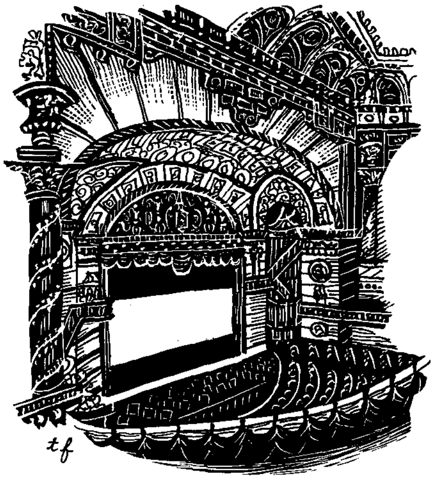
Eastern Standard—An imitation comedy that is as tedious as it is trendy. (11/14/88) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Enrico IV—After a head injury, an Italian nobleman imagines that he is a medieval monarch and lives accordingly. Pirandello wrote this witty, satiric study of madness and masquerade, and, under J. Ranelli's direction, not one moment of it goes to waste. The actors, among them Paul Hecht, in the title role, and Robert Stattel, as a psychiatrist, do well, but the play's the thing. It has been eloquently translated by Robert Cornthwaite and beautifully mounted by Marjorie Bradley Kellogg (scenery) and John Gleason (lighting). (Reviewed in this issue.) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Feb. 8, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2. Closes Feb. 12.)

Forbidden Broadway 1989—A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Toni DiBuono, Roxie Lucas, David B. McDonald, and Michael McGrath—inspired mimics all. (9/26/88) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8:30; Saturdays at 7:30 and 10:30; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3:30.)

Happy Birthday Mama—A black comedy by Roberto Cossa, an Argentine playwright. Performances are in English Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; in Spanish Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30 and 8. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293.)

The Heidi Chronicles—Wendy Wasserstein's new play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With a superb cast, led by Joan Allen. (12/26/88) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)



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I Could Go On Lip-Synching!—This one-man variety show made up of cultural arcana is kind of weird, kind of quirky, and kind of brilliant. Performed by John Epperson and written by him and Justin Ross (who directed), it uses the rhetorical tactics of drag theatre to attack some of the Big Questions, managing not so much to raise lip-synching to an art as to transform aural montage into psychodrama. Certainly, this is the strangest show in town. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556. Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays at 8:30, and Saturdays at 7 and 10.)

The Kathy and Mo Show: Parallel Lives—Comedic skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society, written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. Preview Jan. 30 at 8. Opens Jan. 31 at 7. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays, except Wednesday, Feb. 1, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Legs Diamond—A musical built around Peter Allen, the only man in America less charismatic than George Bush. Mr. Allen put this show together like a leveraged buyout, and it has no book, no lyrics, and no good songs or dance numbers. The best that can be said of his co-star, Julie Wilson, is that she seems completely out of context. Warning: This one isn't even a hoot. (1/9/89) (Mark Hellinger, 237 W. 51st St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting Romberg's **the student prince.** (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30. Closes Feb. 19.)

Manhattan Punch Line—Presenting a festival of new one-act comedies. "Wonderful Party!," by Howard Korder; "The Gettysburg Sound Bite," by Ted Tally; "One Monday," by Matt Cutugno; "Seven Menus," by David Ives; and "Sex Lives of the Superheroes," by Stephen Gregg: Jan. 31 and Feb. 4 at 8, and Feb. 5 at 3. . . . ¶ "The News from St. Petersburg," by Rich Orloff; "Requiem for a Heavyweight," by Mark O'Donnell; "Seeing Someone," by Laurence Klavan; "Pillow Talk," by Peter Tolan; and "Good Honest Food," by Bill Bozzone: Feb. 1-3, Feb. 5, and Feb. 7-8, all at 8. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes Feb. 26.)

Negro Ensemble Company—"We" is the umbrella title for a pair of plays by Charles Fuller—"Sally" and "Prince"—about recently freed slaves during the Civil War, some of them at loose ends and others in the Union Army. The plays are non-vintage Fuller, but they're interesting all the same. The acting is of N.E.C.'s usual high quality. Douglas Turner Ward directed. The plays will alternate weekly, with both scheduled on Sundays. "Sally": Feb. 1-5; "Prince": Feb. 5 and Feb. 8-11. (1/9/89) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, Saturdays at 3, and Sundays at 2:30.)

The Night Hank Williams Died—A play by Larry L. King. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Our Town—Spalding Gray's monotonous and cynical performance as the Stage Manager almost blights this revival of Thornton Wilder's masterpiece, but there is good work by Roberta Maxwell, Peter Maloney, Frances Conroy, Penelope Ann Miller, and Eric Stoltz. (12/19/88) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Rumors—This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has ever written. It is acted to perfection by Christine Baranski, André Gregory, Mark Nelson, Ron Leibman, Lisa Banes, Joyce Van Patten, Charles Brown, and Cynthia Darlow, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (11/28/88) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

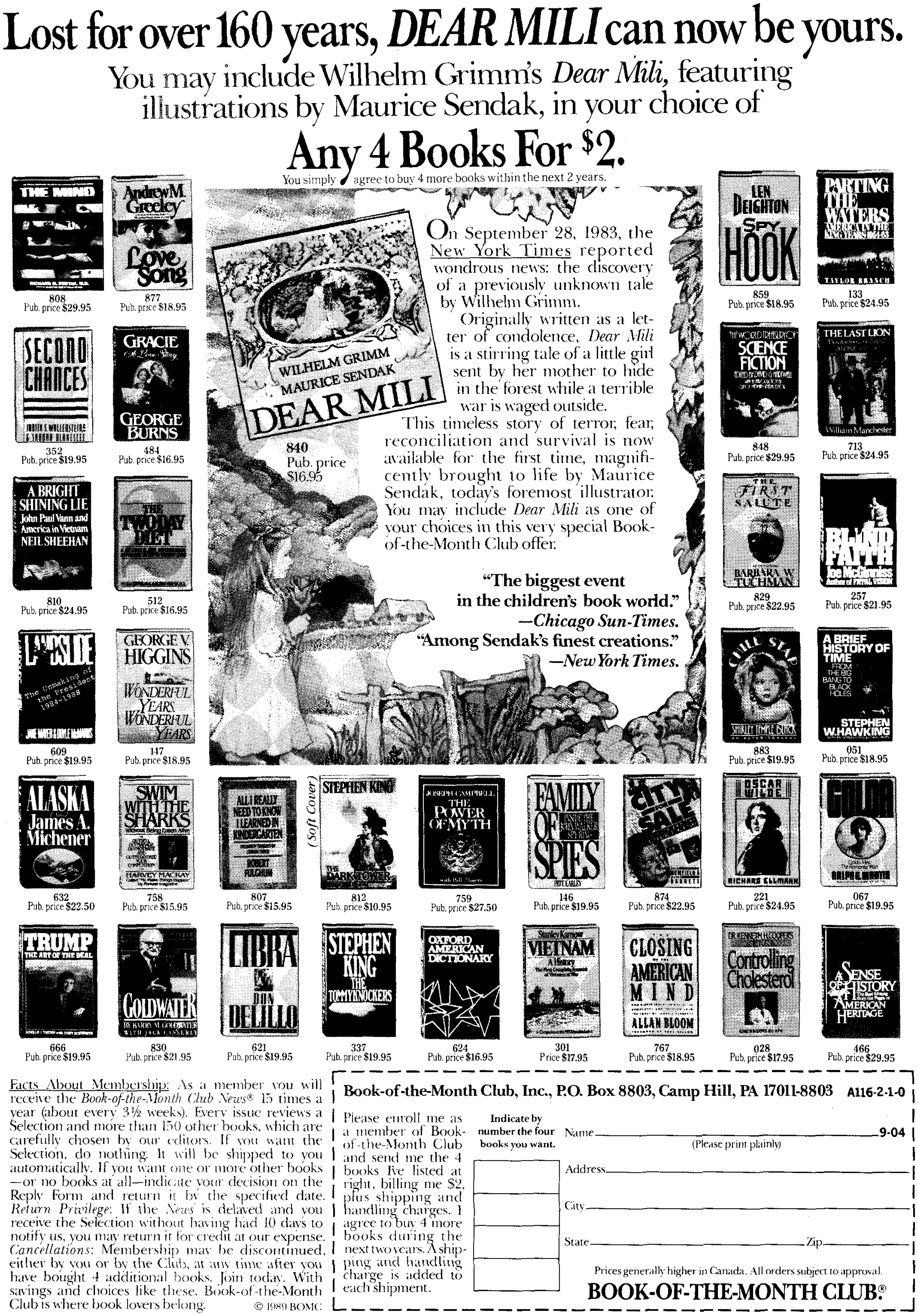
Songs of Paradise—A musical based on the works of the Yiddish poet Itsik Manger. In Yiddish and English; with a book by Miriam Hoffman and Rena Berkowicz Borow, and music by Rosalie Gerut. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

The Taffetas—Four talented young women, impersonating a group of singing sisters, perform hits from the fifties. The show, conceived by Rick Lewis as a live broadcast from the early days of television, represents yet another trip down memory lane. Still, for what it is, it's very well done. With Jody Abrahams, Karen Curlee, Melanie Mitchell, and Tia Speros. (Top of the Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 982-9292. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 7:30; and Saturdays and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3:30.)

A Tale of Two Cities—Everett Quinton's over-the-top one-man version of Dickens' novel has Miss Pross literally hanging from the ceiling. Unfortunately, his performance is more spirited than it is consistently funny. Best is the word "BLOOD" scrawled on the bathroom wall. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, One Sheridan Square. 691-2271. Thursdays through Sundays at 8.)

'Tis the Morning—A play by Ruth Beckford and Ron Stacker Thompson. Miss Beckford is in the cast; Mr. Thompson directed. (Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 869-3981. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—anything goes: This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Patti LuPone, Anthony Heald, Bill McCutcheon, and Howard McGillin, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **cats:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets and costumes of John Napier. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Mondays through Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **a chorus line:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE—Cont'd

is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE:** Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue. With Bill Smitrovich and Caroline Aaron. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **INTO THE WOODS:** This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. Directed by Mr. Lapine. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **M. BUTTERFLY:** David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play, with David Dukes and B. D. Wong. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **ME AND MY GIRL:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The real stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **OIL CITY SYMPHONY:** Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Michelle Horman, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny musical. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **SARAFINA!:** This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. The acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

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DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Jan. 31 at 8: "Mozartiana," "The Waltz Project," and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 8: "Donizetti Variations," "The Chairman Dances," "Sonatas and Interludes," and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 8: "Interplay," "Stars and Stripes," and the premières of "Beethoven Romance" and "Mozart Serenade." . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 8: "Mozartiana," "Piano Pieces," and "Serenade." . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 2: "Mozartiana," "Beethoven Romance," "Mozart Serenade," and "The Waltz Project." . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 8: "Raymonda Variations," "Ballade," "Calcium Light Night," and "Piano Pieces." . . . ¶ Feb. 5 at 1: "Mozartiana," "Ivesiana," and "Fancy Free." . . . ¶ Feb. 5 at 7: "The Waltz Project," "Beethoven Romance," "Mozart Serenade," and "Stars and Stripes." . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 8: "The Chairman Dances," "Sonatas and Interludes," "Beethoven Romance," "Mozart Serenade," and "The Four Seasons." . . . ¶ Feb. 8 at 8: Divertimento from "Le Baiser de la Fée," "Ballade," "Calcium Light Night," and "The Four Seasons." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Feb. 26.)

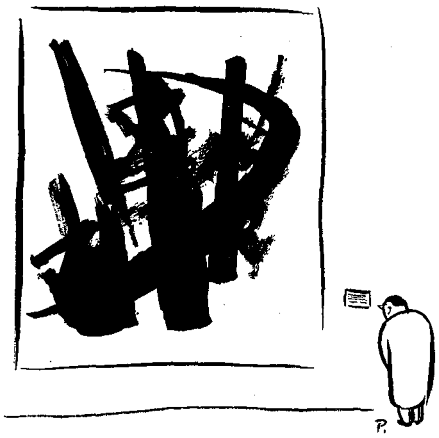
FELD BALLET—Opening performances of a six-week engagement. Jan. 31-Feb. 1 at 8: "The Consort," "Intermezzo No. 1," and "Skara Brae." . . . ¶ Feb. 2-3 at 8: "A Footstep of Air," "Petipa Notwithstanding" (New York première), and "Embraced Waltzes." . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 8: "Harbinger," "Kore" (New York première), "Over the Pavement," and "Love Song Waltzes" (première). . . . ¶ Feb. 5 at 2: "A Footstep of Air," "Petipa Notwithstanding," and "Embraced Waltzes." . . . ¶ Feb. 5 at 7:30: "Harbinger," "Kore," "Over the Pavement," and "Love Song Waltzes." . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 8: "The Consort," "Intermezzo No. 1," and "Skara Brae." . . . ¶ Feb. 8 at 8: "Aurora I," "Medium:Rare," "Asia" (New York première), and "Love Song Waltzes." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Through March 12.)

BASEL BALLET—A Swiss company in a one-week engagement. Jan. 31 at 7:30; Feb. 4 at 2 and 8; and Feb. 5 at 3: "La Fille Mal Gardée." . . . ¶ Feb. 1-3 at 8: "La Belle Vie." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

RALPH LEMON AND COMPANY—Presenting "Sleep" (première) and "Happy Trails." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Feb. 2-4 at 8, and Feb. 5 at 3. Through Feb. 12.)

JANE COMFORT DANCE COMPANY—In "Cliffs Notes: Macbeth" and the premières of "Portrait" and an unnamed work. (Midtown Y, 344 E. 14th St. 673-2207. Feb. 4 at 8 and Feb. 5 at 3 and 8.)

NOTE—The New York City Ballet is presenting a series of discussions on "the collaborative nature of the creative process." Jan. 30 at 6: Edward Villella, Carole Divet, Lindsay Fischer, Jean-Pierre Frohlich, and Kyra Nichols. Robert Gottlieb is the moderator. . . . ¶ Feb. 6 at 6: Barbara Matera, Mark Stanley, Rouben Ter-Arutunian, and Jennifer Tipton. Perry Silvey is the moderator. (New York State Theatre. For information about tickets, call 870-5677.)



NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**HARRY CONNICK, JR.**, a young, tradition-minded singer and pianist who came up the river from New Orleans a couple of years ago (his way smoothed by his friend Wynton Marsalis, the prince of the New Orleans jazz renaissance), has landed in the woody old nook known as the Oak Room. Shows Jan. 31-Feb. 1 at nine-fifteen and Feb. 2-4 at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. **MARGARET WHITING**, who predates Mr. Connick by a few decades and does not trail him in enthusiasm for the songs of the past (particularly those written by her father, Richard Whiting, and his generation), begins a six-week visit on Feb. 7. Dining.

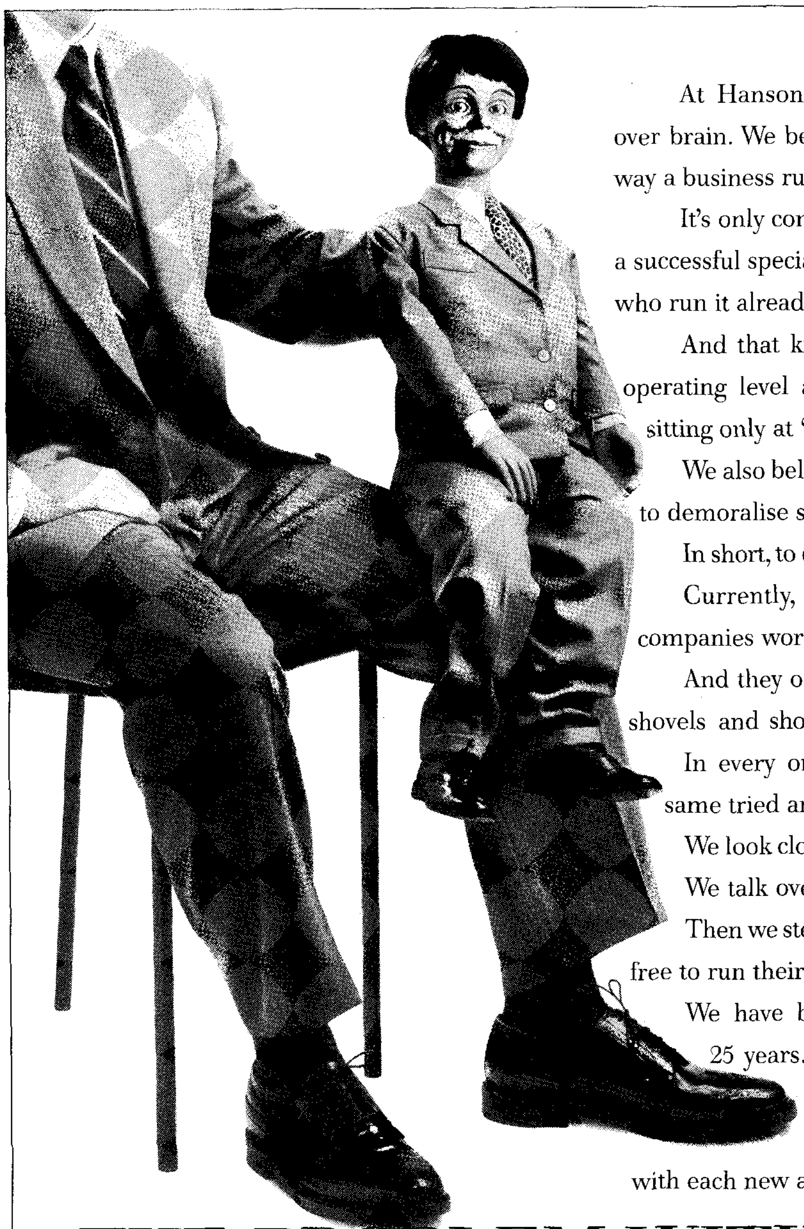
BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets. **PEGGY LEE**, whose soft, low, slinky, subtle voice age has not withered nor custom staled, sings at nine and eleven Tuesdays through Saturdays. She will be preceded by her title (Miss) and is likely to be wearing her all-white costume, in which she resembles a Vision. **JOHN WALLOWITCH**, whose round specs and dapper bow tie suggest that he might be a member of the Witty Songwriters' League, is the composer of a very funny number about a transvestite ("Bruce," made famous by Blossom Dearie). His many other works include a song in praise of his expensively jacketed teeth, and a roundelay (dedicated to Ed Koch, the diction expert) which turns on a common mispronunciation of "ask." He sings them all here at six-thirty Wednesdays through Saturdays.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—A fledgling jazz operation that could easily be mistaken for a yuppie bar. The scenery includes waiters and waitresses in Reeboks and neckties, some trees, a rainbow-colored Wurlitzer jukebox, and some nice-looking neon wading birds. Tenor saxophonist **RICKY FORD** leads a hard-bop quartet on Feb. 2; **PÉ-DE-BOI**, a souped-up New York hard-samba band, plays Feb. 3-4. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A long, narrow, bemirrored room with a piece of neon art on the back wall (the Manhattan skyline and attendant celestial bodies) and jazz people of various magnitudes on the dais. Alto saxophonist **PAQUITO D'RIVERA** and his Havana–New York Ensemble mix merengues and hard bop Jan. 31-Feb. 5; they'll be spelled by flutist **DAVE VALENTIN'S** quintet. Music from nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A great barn of a rock club, which, unlike many other such places, has (in addition to rock) tables, chairs (four hundred or so), good French fries, country music, folk music, music of a dubious nature, and miscellaneous theatrical entertainments. Peter Noone, whose work as Herman of Herman's Hermits has not been eclipsed by his post-Herman career as an actor and a rock crooner, will be here on Feb. 2; **NRBQ**, a band that has escaped commercial success for twenty years (but has won a loyal following with its rockabilly and jump tunes and covers of pop schlock), comes in on Feb. 3; **UNCLE BONSAI**, a Seattle-based vocal trio made up of two cute sopranos and one red-bearded countertenor, performs on Feb. 4; the **FIVE BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA**, an eminent gospel group, hold forth on Feb. 6, along with blues singer and guitarist **JOHN HAMMOND**. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

6440)—A Village bar that has long featured first-rate piano-bass teams and pro conversationalists and that now also features horn players, Bradley's T-shirts, Bradley's sweatshirts, Bradley's customized coasters, a person to take an admission fee, and a person to seat you and shush you. It's an institution. Pianist **RICHARD WYANDS** and bassist **RED MITCHELL** are on duty through Feb. 4; Feb. 5 belongs to trumpeter **DANNY MOORE'S** trio. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlos I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—It's so nice in here—silken woodwork and long tables with pink tablecloths and pink napkins—you might mistake it for a jazz club on a movie set but for the real musicians onstage. **JAY MC SHANN**, a solid-oak Kansas City swing pianist and gentlemanly blues singer, will be around with a quintet Jan. 31-Feb. 5. Tenor saxophonist **BIG NICK NICHOLAS** leads a combo on Mondays. Music from nine-thirty. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The pastel spa known as the Café Carlyle is the winter home of **GEORGE SHEARING**, the London-born pianist famous for his cool, light touch and his puns and the jaunty way he sings "You're the Pits" ("like the late ZaSu, you're the pits"). Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Bemelmans Bar, pianist-singer **BARBARA CARROLL** presides from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—This room, which caters to thrash-metal buffs and cooler heads on weeknights, opens its doors on Sundays to swing-music fans, most of whom come to Lindy. Feet jitter, skirts fly, and a limber, nattily dressed gent gets a look on his face that says "Watch my next move, darlin'." Up by the stage, two men who have come stag scatter their feet when the band breaks into "Jumpin' at the Woodside." Bill Conway & the Swing Express, an eleven-piece band featuring vocalist Amy London, will be here on Feb. 5. Music from eight to midnight.

Delta 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A long, rambling bar and restaurant with a white-trash-chicken-shack theme. The decorator went kind of hog-wild with all the old filling-station and soft-drink signs and the hubcaps and the dime-store portrait of the King and the display of dozer caps and the shingle from the taxidermist in Spanish Fort, Alabama—but it's a friendly enough place. Mardi Gras is observed here; you can observe it with the zydeco band **LOUP GAROU** (on Feb. 3), Lucky 7 (on Feb. 4), and **RAMSEY MC LEAN** & His New Orleans Natives (on Shrove Tuesday). Mondays are gospel nights. Shows after nine. Chicken-fried steak, deep-fried crawdads (a.k.a. Cajun popcorn), and other exotic fare.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—An Irish bar, way out on the Western edge of town, where the great potholed boulevards turn to cobblestones, and the world across the Hudson flashes its come-hither signs. The back room, trimmed with seaworthy things, has traditional Hibernian sounds on Fridays and native string-band music on Saturdays. Fiddlers Andy McGann and Paddy Reynolds, accompanied by guitarist Louise O'Shea, perform Feb. 3; Kentucky Roots, a Garden State bluegrass band led by banjoist Steve Lutke, holds forth Feb. 4.

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Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—A red-velvet-and-mirror-walled lair that will seem intimate to some people and too intimate to tall people (who may want to remove their homburgs before entering). **ASTRUD GILBERTO**, a flower of the early-sixties bossa-nova movement whose wisp of a voice sometimes sounds romantically wistful and sometimes merely disconsolate, will be here Jan. 31-Feb. 5. Mondays are set aside for guitarist **LES PAUL**, who was known as Rhubarb Red back in the twenties and thirties, when he was an itinerant country picker. Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—Two nice things not known to be available in the next world—Chinese cooking and American jazz—can be found in this handsome room, from which is visible (it has a greenhouse roof) some expensive Gotham real estate as well as a few untenanted patches of sky. The Steinway will be in the flying hands of **ADAM MAKOWICZ** Jan. 31-Feb. 5. **TONY MONTE** works with bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** on Feb. 6. Starting Feb. 7, Mr. Moore joins **ROGER KELLAWAY**, a pianist for whom two hands aren't always enough (he'll use an elbow to punctuate one of his romps around the keyboard). Music from eight-thirty on Mondays, from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, from eight on Fridays and Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

Indigo Blues, 221 W. 46th St. (221-0033)—A new jazz club, in the basement of the Hotel Edison. It's awash in blue neon, and has a fancy sound system and a shiny dance floor. Miles Davis, whose disdain for night clubs is well known ("plantation" was his term for one famous room) and who had managed to stay out of them since 1975, christened this place a few weeks ago. Pianist **ONAJE ALLAN GUMBS** and a band play Jan. 31-Feb. 5; tenor saxophonist **JOE HENDERSON** brings in a group on Feb. 7. Mondays have been turned over to a big band run by pianist **TOSHIKO AKIYOSHI**. Music after nine.

Jan Wallman's, 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—A room fit for a singer, an accompanist or two, and a party of forty-eight. Jan. 31-Feb. 4, **MARTI STEVENS** and her accompanist, **BUDDY BARNES**, perform songs by the team of Cy Coleman and Carolyn Leigh. Shows at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. **STEVE KUHN** and **RON CARTER**, an accomplished piano-bass team, are here Tuesdays through Saturdays. Sundays and Mondays are the property of singer-pianist-hot patootie **PHOEBE LEGÈRE**. Music from about nine-thirty.

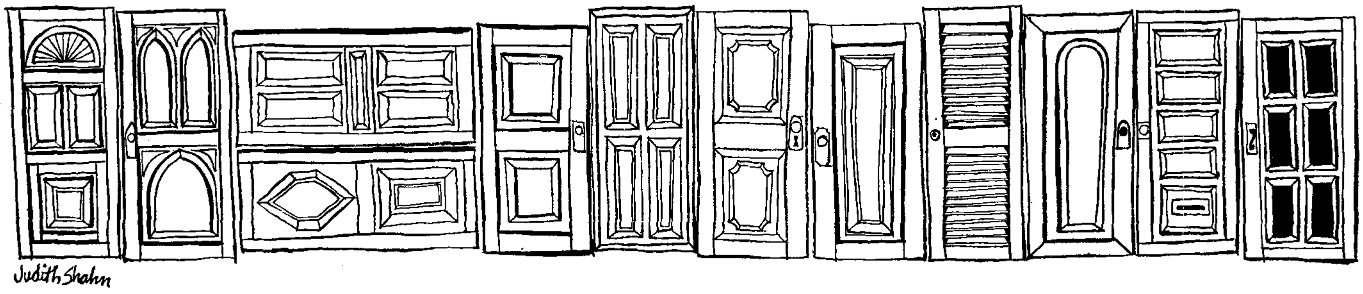
Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music and performing space, where people come to ponder the meaning of harmolodics and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on such things as cover charges are enlightened. The lineup: Jan. 31, bassist **REGGIE WORKMAN'S** ensemble; Feb. 1, the **MICROSCOPIC SEPTET**; Feb. 3, **LIVE SKULL**, a Lower East Side wall-of-guitar-noise rock band; and Feb. 4, **CURLEW**. Music after nine.

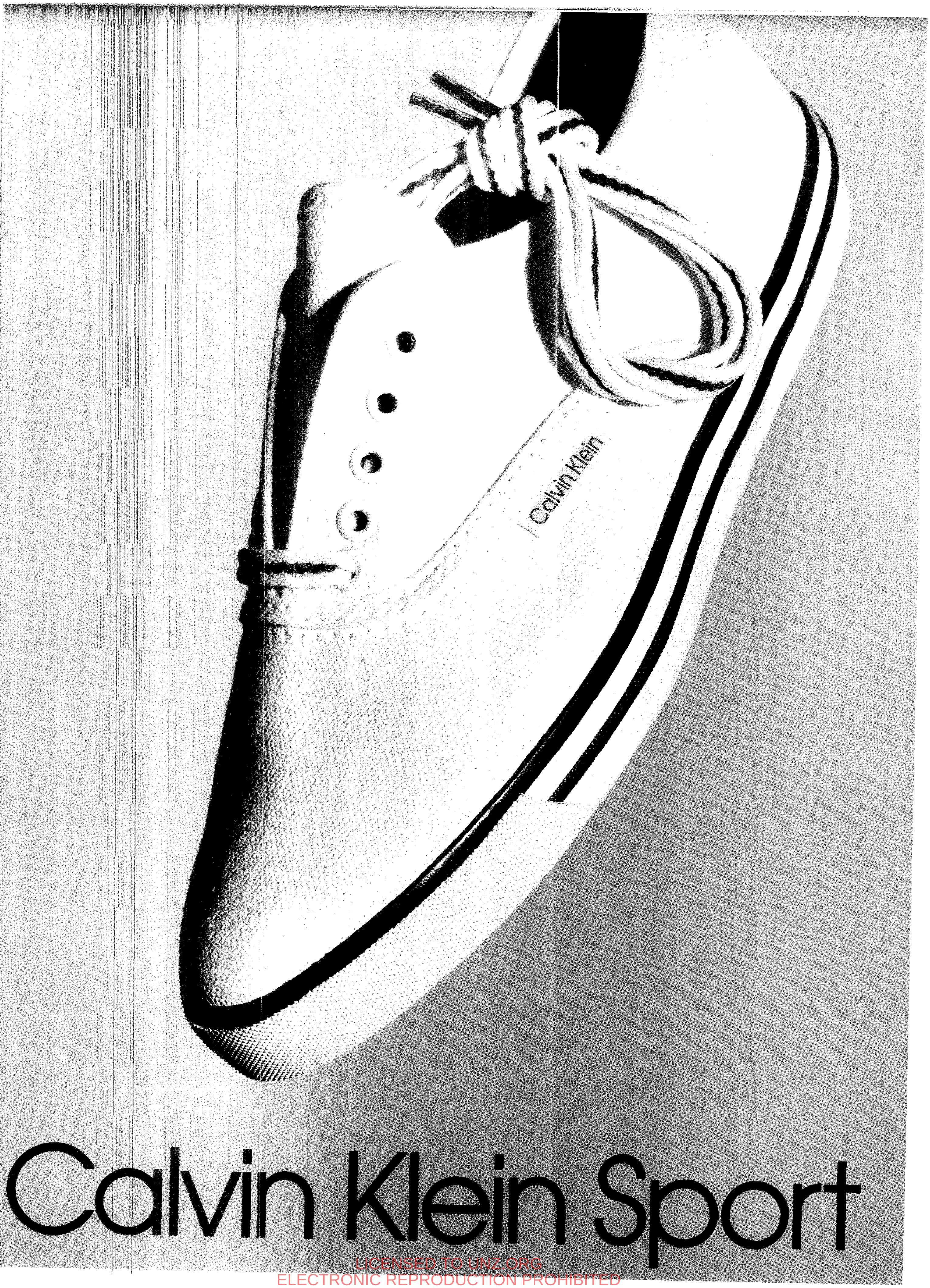
Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—A cramped Yankee version of a Texas bar. It's draped with flags and banners, and plastered with signs and stickers ("Don't Mess with Texas," "Western Swing Ain't Dead, It's Asleep at the Wheel," "Waitress Station Only: Do Not Stand Here," "Visit the Lone Star Store"), and its denizens include guys who like to wave their long-neck Coronas around and say things like "Woo-weee" and "I need an I.V. to rock and roll right now." The schedule: Jan. 31, Aztec Two-Step and Lori Carson; Feb. 2, **CHRIS SPEDDING** and the Broadcasters; Feb. 3, **ROBERT GORDON**; and Feb. 4, a band featuring Eric Ambel of the Del-Lords. Music after nine. Dining.

Lone Star Roadhouse, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—The midtown branch of the aforementioned honky-tonk. The façade is a Silver Eagle bus, the kind your itinerant musician tools around in. The inside is upscale roadhouse; it has a couple of postage-stamp dance floors and some real pretty Gibson guitars decorating the walls. **ROOMFUL OF BLUES**, a brassy jump band from Rhode Island, holds forth on Feb. 1; drummer, singer, and screen star **LEVON HELM** will be here on Feb. 3. Music after nine. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A mid-Manhattan pub for well-heeled gents and their high-heeled foxes. It's not always easy to detect the music over the babble, but if you listen closely you should be able to hear a small band of men re-creating the subdued, tailcoated sounds of the John Kirby Sextet. The Kirby combo, which flourished in the late thirties and early forties, was a finesse band, its music (some of it derived from classical material) tightly arranged and lightly swinging. The band played in tony hotel lounges as well as Fifty-second Street establishments, and was the first black jazz group to have a network-radio show. **JOHN COLIANNI**, a young pianist who grew up in Washington, D.C., and has worked with Lionel Hampton, is the leader of the Kirby revivalists. **LA VERNE BUTLER** sings some of the numbers that Maxine Sullivan, Kirby's wife, did with the Sextet. Shows at nine and eleven Jan. 31-Feb. 4. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5100)—This great ballroom-in-the-sky has led a fitful life. It was a full-blown night club from 1934 to 1943 (dancing to Jolly Coburn, Ray Noble, and Glen Gray, and shows with Astaire and Rogers, Beatrice Lillie, and the Revuers); it was closed from 1943 to 1950; it was a restaurant from 1950 to 1975; and it offered dinner dancing (but no shows) from 1975 to 1985. Now, after being shut again for a couple of years, it has been restored to its stately and beautiful Art Deco self. (The original chandelier, hung from a peach-and-pale-blue ceiling, is back, and the dance floor, a replica of the old one, is revolving once more—at its nineteen-thirties half a mile an hour.) The non-stop music is by the Rainbow Room Orchestra, a streamlined society band led by a graceful, velvet-toned trumpeter named Joe Cabot, and by Mauricio Smith and Friends, a rocketing Latin band. Music from seven-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, from eight Fridays and Saturdays, and from six on Sundays. Dining. Closed Mondays. . . . **RAINBOW**

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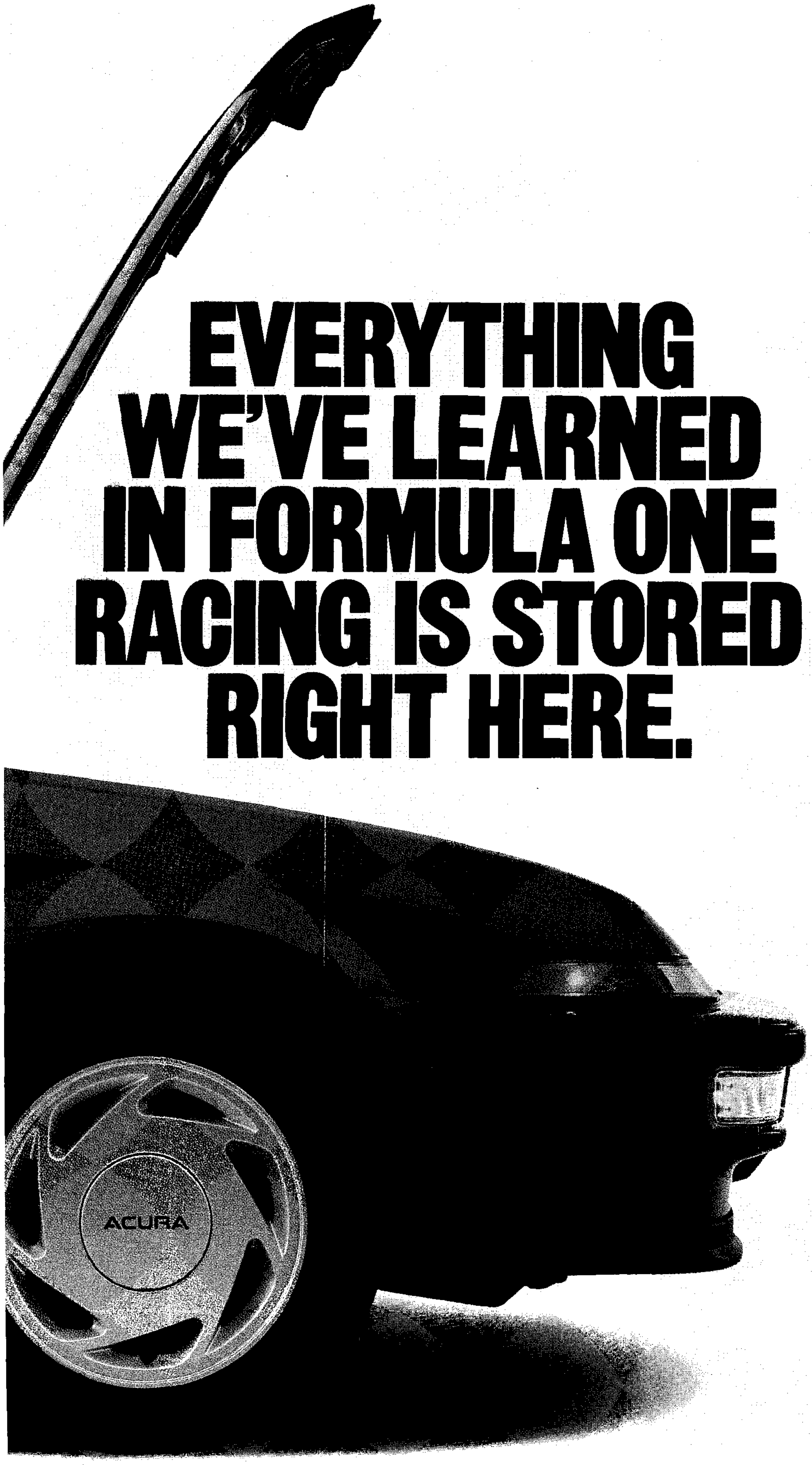
Calvin Klein Sport



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

& STARS (632-5100): A new, glossy, multilevel, black-and-silver cabaret, seating about ninety, and located on the north side of the sixty-fifth floor in what used to be a cocktail lounge. The performers, working in a shallow well in the center of the room, do unwitting battle with the bejewelled backdrop of Central Park, Lenox Avenue, the G. W. Bridge, and points north. **ROBERT MERRILL** ends his engagement Feb. 4, and the fine **ROSEMARY CLOONEY** comes in on Feb. 7. Shows from nine-fifteen. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—Traditional jazz (big- and little-band Swing, several varieties of Dixieland) in the theatre district, and not a bad place to calm down in if, for instance, you happen to have just dropped a week's wages by taking the missus and your aunt from Macon to see a Broadway musical. Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock and roll of the Present Moment—and occasionally of the Classical Era (the fifties), the Romantic Era (the sixties), and the OPEC Era (the seventies)—in a big thirties-era ballroom that is equipped with banks of video monitors and some impressive-looking bouncers and I.D.-card checkers. (Drinkers are required to wear plastic wristbands, similar in style to those that hospitals give their patients.) **SCRUFFY THE CAT,** a Boston band that mixes rockabilly with sixties-ish pop tunes, will be here on Feb. 4 at ten.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A big, cheerful room, painted a light tropical blue, where you can pick 'em up and set 'em down to sounds from Brazil, Africa, the Caribbean, and elsewhere. The schedule: Feb. 1-2, reggae crooner **YELLOWMAN;** Feb. 3, **TABOU COMBO,** a Haitian band; Feb. 7, **C. J. CHENIER** (son of the late Clifton, *roi de zydeco*) and the **RED HOT LOUISIANA BAND;** Feb. 8-9, South African trumpeter **HUGH MASEKELA.** Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Mondays.

Spo-Dee-O-Dee, 565 W. 23rd St., at Eleventh Ave. (206-1990)—A curious mixture of swank and down-home. (The name comes from the 1949 Stick McGhee song "Drinkin' Wine, Spo-dee-o-dee," which was Atlantic Records' first hit.) The food is barbecued ribs and such, the music is mostly R. & B., and the furnishings include ballroom-size chandeliers, king-size sofas, and green velvet drapes sprinkled with stardust. **LUTHER (GUITAR JUNIOR) JOHNSON,** a former Muddy Waters sideman whose repertoire runs from deep, ominous Waters-style blues to lighter, soul-style material, will be here with a band on Feb. 4.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A knotty-pine-and-brick-walled *boîte*, crowded with jazz fans from Japan, France, Germany, Denmark, Greenwich Village, and other countries. **CECIL TAYLOR,** a pianist and composer who is, as his fellow-visionary Walt Whitman said of himself, "free, fresh, savage, fluent, luxuriant," leads a trio Jan. 31-Feb. 5. A Taylor set sometimes consists of a single piece, lasting seventy-five minutes or more, and it sometimes seems to be as much an athletic performance as a musical one. Taylor doesn't treat his audience or his instrument gently; he attacks the piano with fists, forearms, elbows, the backs of his hands; he chants and rocks and all the while produces a mass of sound that has order and shape and moments when you think you can't take it anymore and a moment or two when you can almost relax. When he's done, he doesn't hang around the stage, listening to the cheers; he flees. **JAMES MOODY,** a former Dizzy Gillespie sidekick who plays animated saxophone and flute and sings a little, too, comes in for a week starting Feb. 7. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the downstairs room, which is as big and plain as a mess hall, **VALERIE WELLINGTON,** a young, Chicago-born blues singer, performs Feb. 3-4. She's a small, cherubic-looking woman with an electric smile and a voice that can travel long distances and cut through the noisiest tavern clatter. (She sometimes lets you hear her voice unamplified, in all its naked glory, and it's as if she had left the blaring world for another realm.) Some blues fans may be disappointed by her choice of material—at a show at the now defunct Tramps a while back, she sang a lot of humorous, sexy-woman blues and stayed clear of the darker stuff—but her voice is full of promise. Sets at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. . . . ¶ One flight up, in the Terrace Bar, pianist **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and bassist **CLINT HOUSTON** are on duty nightly, except Mondays, from ten. On Tuesdays, they trade sets with jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN'S** trio.

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Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now in its second half century, this establishment has been described by Max Gordon, the wise, elfin, cigar-smoking proprietor, as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." **FRANK WESS,** a saxophonist and flutist who worked in the Basie band in the fifties and early sixties, leads a quartet Jan. 31-Feb. 5. Jan. 30 and the week beginning Feb. 6 belong to drummer **MEL LEWIS'S** big band, which made its début here (with Thad Jones as co-pilot) twenty-three years ago this month. Music after ten.

Zanzibar & Grill, 550 Third Ave., at 36th St. (779-0606)—A Murray Hill jazz resort, where the ceiling fans turn slowly, and the palm trees susurrate tropically, and the jukebox contains Xavier Cugat and Perez Prado, and a waiter, delivering a plate of fried chicken and maple-pear corn bread to a customer, sings "It's suppertime" (to the tune of "Summertime"). The professional musicians tend to come on at around nine. They include saxophonist **C. SHARPE** (with the Ari Roland trio) on Mondays; pianist **BEN ARONOV** (with the Zanziband) on Feb. 1; pianist-singer Al Bundy on Feb. 3-4; and pianist Roy Gerson (with a sextet) on Feb. 5.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A bright, spacious, lightly forested bar and restaurant with an in-between room from which music issues, putting an end to some discussions and inspiring others. **TED ROSENTHAL,** a twenty-nine-year-old New York pianist who won the 1988 Thelonious Monk International Piano Competition (the judges included Tommy Flanagan and Roland Hanna), holds forth Jan. 30-Feb. 4; **JAY ANDERSON** will be on bass. Sundays are reserved for the guitar-bass team of **GENE BERTONCINI** and **MICHAEL MOORE.** Music from eight weeknights and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / ROCK / PERSONAL APPEARANCES / PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Scott Johnson—Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Jan. 30-31 and Feb. 6-7, all at 8.

"Short Takes"—Geri Allen, Denise Delapenha, Leroy Jenkins, and Hannibal Peterson performing original works. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 265-4375. Jan. 31-Feb. 4 at 8.)

Dionne Warwick and Johnny Mathis—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Feb. 1-4 at 8.

Highlights in Jazz—Clark Terry, Barney Kessel, Frank Wess, Major Holley, Niels Lan Doky, Marion Cowings, Kim Shaw, and Kenny Washington. (Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. 998-4949. Feb. 2 at 8.)

Marilyn Crispell and Butch Morris—The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Feb. 2-4 at 8:30.

Jeffrey Essmann—La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Thursdays through Saturdays at 10. Through Feb. 18.

New Edition—With Al B. Sure! and Bobby Brown. (Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. Feb. 4 at 7:30.)

G. S. Sachdev and K. Paramjyoti—Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Feb. 4 at 8.

Heavenly Jazz Concert Series—The fifth in a series of six concerts, this one performed by Kenny Davern and Warren Vaché. (Church of the Heavenly Rest, Fifth Ave. at 90th St. Feb. 5 at 5. Tickets at the door on the evening of the concert.)

Ziggy Marley & the Melody Makers—Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 749-5838. Feb. 6 at 7 and 10:30.

Suzanne Vega and Laurie Anderson—In a benefit concert. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Feb. 8 at 8.)

Robert Cray Band—With John Hiatt and the Goners. (Radio City Music Hall. Feb. 8-9 at 8.)

P.S. 122—Benefit performances. Feb. 2 at 8: Meredith Monk, Alien Comic, Spalding Gray, and others. . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 8: Molissa Fenley, Eric Bogosian, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, and others. . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 11: Lambs Eat Ivy, Ethyl Eichelberger, Mimi Goese, and others. . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 8: Bill T. Jones, David Van Tieghem, Karen Finley, Philip Glass, and others. . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 11: Frank Maya, John Kelly, David Dorfman, and others. . . . ¶ Feb. 5 at 8: David Cale, Jeff McMahon, Kimati Dinizulu, Alison Salzinger, and others. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Joseph Cornell (1903-72)—Twenty collages. Through Feb. 28. (Mathes, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Cheryl Goldsleger—Recent paintings and drawings of imaginary architectural spaces filled with folding chairs. Through Feb. 4. (Urdang, 23 E. 74th St.)

Frederick Kiesler (1890-1965)—Drawings and a model for what he called his Endless House. Through Feb. 25. (McCoy, 19 E. 71st St. A retrospective can currently be seen at the Whitney Museum.)

Le Corbusier (1887-1965)—Drawings. Through Feb. 25. (Kouros, 23 E. 73rd St.)

Alfred H. Maurer (1868-1932)—Cubist paintings. Through Feb. 27. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

George McNeil—Recent Expressionist paintings. Through Feb. 2. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Joan Miró (1893-1983)—Paintings, sculptures, and ceramics. Through March 25. (Perls, 1016 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Avner Moriah—A series of paintings based on the Garden of Eden, as well as the artist's more familiar canvases documenting violence in the Middle East. Through Feb. 4. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Thérèse Oulton—Abstract oils, in the artist's first solo show in New York. Through Feb. 18. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Open Mondays.)

Theodore Roszak (1907-81) **and Clarence H. Carter**—Paintings and drawings by both art-

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ART—Cont'd

ists. Through Feb. 25. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St.)

Gregory Williams—Surreal landscapes. Through Feb. 25. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Robert Barry—Two shows of new paintings. Through Feb. 4. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St., open Mondays; and Pretto, 251 Sixth Ave., at Houston St., opens at 1.)

James Bohary—Recent abstract paintings. Through Feb. 4. (Prats, 24 W. 57th St.)

Philippe Favier—Paintings on irregularly shaped glass, reversed so that the mediums (enamels and pigmented cold ceramic glazes) are seen through the glass. Through Feb. 4. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Janet Fish—New paintings and works on paper. Through Feb. 25. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Mary Frank—Paintings on glass, metal, and paper, plus a few sculptures. Through Feb. 18. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Gerome Kamrowski—Surrealist and Abstract Expressionist works from the forties. Through Feb. 4. (Washburn, 41 E. 57th St.)

Rockwell Kent (1882-1971)—Paintings, drawings, prints, and ceramics. Through Feb. 4. (ACA, 41 E. 57th St.)

Alun Leach-Jones—Recent abstract paintings. Through Feb. 18. (Ross, 50 W. 57th St.)

Agnes Martin—New geometric paintings. Through Feb. 11. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Victor Pasmore—New abstract paintings. Through Feb. 4. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Nina Posnansky—Still-lifes and circus performers are among the subjects of these expressionistic paintings and works on paper. Through Feb. 11. (Gallery 84, at 50 W. 57th St.)

Karl Schrag—Landscapes, still-lifes, and portraits. Through Feb. 8. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Sidney Janis Fortieth Anniversary—Pairings of Giacometti with Mondrian and Arp with Léger in a tribute to the recently retired dealer who pioneered the two-artist exhibition. Through March 11. (110 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Sculpture—A two-part show of five American and five Swiss post-minimalists which has travelled from museums in Aarau and Lausanne. Through Feb. 10. (City Gallery, 2 Columbus Circle. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays. . . . ¶ Swiss Institute, 35 W. 67th St. Mondays through Fridays, 2 to 8; Saturdays and Sundays, 2 to 6.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Conrad Atkinson—New "front-page" paintings, in which the artist offers his version of such publications as the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Village Voice*. Also, sculptures. Through Feb. 4. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Ilan Averbuch—Six sculptures incorporating a variety of materials; two of the pieces contain water. Through Feb. 15. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

Sonia Balassanian—New works on paper by an artist whose nudes have the blurred look of Rorschach blots; also, sculptures. Through Feb. 11. (Exit Art, 578 Broadway.)

Rosemarie Beck—Recent figurative paintings based on themes from Yeats and Ovid. Through Feb. 4. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

Arthur Cohen—Abstract paintings on shaped canvases. Through Feb. 11. (Stephen Rosenberg, 115 Wooster St.)

Michael Eastman—New paintings. Through Feb. 9. (Eno, 164 Mercer St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

John Ferren (1905-70)—Nonobjective paintings and works on paper. Through Feb. 2. (Perlow, 560 Broadway.)

Yoshishige Furukawa—Abstract paintings and drawings. Through Feb. 11. (Condeso-Lawler, 76 Greene St.)

Richard Haas—Drawings, models, maquettes, and prints documenting trompe-l'oeil murals the artist has undertaken during the last seven years. Through Feb. 4. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

Nancy Haynes—New abstract paintings on wood and linen. Through Feb. 4. (Good, 532 Broadway.)

James Hayward—Thickly painted canvases, many of which are divided up into three or four solid fields of color. Through Feb. 4. (M-13, at 72 Greene St.)

Jane Irish—New paintings of malls and corporate headquarters that are seen springing up in the midst of lush landscapes; strawberries, lemons, and apples are painted on several of the frames. Through March 4. (Sharpe, 152 Wooster St.)

Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel—A new installation titled "Ecclesia." Through March 4. (Brandt, 568 Broadway.)

Per Kirkeby—Sculptures, drawings, and prints. Through Feb. 8. (Auchincloss, 558 Broadway.)

Ronnie Landfield—Abstract paintings vaguely suggestive of landscapes. Through Feb. 8. (Haller, 415 West Broadway.)

Thomas Lawson—New paintings. Through Feb. 18. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Molly Mason—Freestanding abstract sculptures in stainless steel and copper. Through Feb. 18. (SoHo 20, at 469 Broome St. Opens at noon.)

Geer Morton—Still-life paintings on canvas and paper. Through Feb. 15. (Twining, 568 Broadway.)

Dennis Oppenheim—For this show, the Gibson gallery has been transformed into a sort of surrealistic playroom, with such diversions as a pair of bass drums that sound off for no apparent reason and a welding mask that circles endlessly on an electric train. Through Feb. 4. (568 Broadway.)

Richard Pettibone—Sculptures, and paintings offering advice such as "Read Ezra Pound Quick." Through Feb. 4. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

David Rabinowitch—Concentric rings carved into the plaster walls of the Flynn gallery, as part of a sculptural installation. Through April 29. (Flynn, a new gallery at 113 Crosby St.)

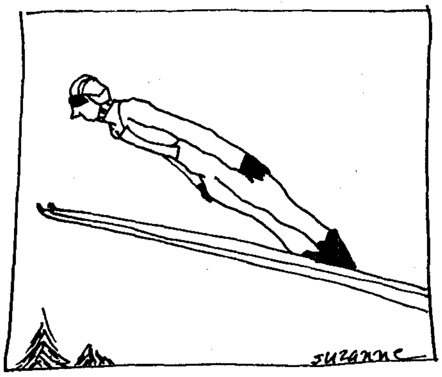
Leo Rabkin—Stitched-linen wall pieces from the past year, and painted wall constructions from the forties, fifties, and sixties. Through Feb. 11. (Pearl, 420 West Broadway.)

Mark Schwartz—Expressionist paintings. Through Feb. 25. (Baum, 588 Broadway. Open Mondays.)

Maura Sheehan—An installation the gallery describes as a "light-as-air construction of nets and globes." Through Feb. 25. (Facchetti, 476 Broadway.)

Theodoros Stamos—Large paintings. Through Feb. 4. (Dorsky, 578 Broadway.)

Robert Sussman—New nonobjective paintings. Through Feb. 18. (55 Mercer Street Gallery.)



Julie Wachtel—New multipanel works by an artist who juxtaposes oil paintings of cartoon characters with silk screens of celebrities. The cartoon characters are borrowed from greeting cards and the celebrities are out of the pages of *People*. Through Feb. 8. (Brown, 560 Broadway.)

Group Shows—At **art 54**, 54 Greene St.: Paintings, drawings, and sculptures by Sarah Plimpton, Fritz Bultman, Cecile Muhlstein, Peter Begley, and others. Through Feb. 5. (Open Sundays.) . . . **cooper**, 155 Wooster St.: One work each by Jonathan Borofsky, Nancy Shaver, Richard Artschwager, and three others. Through Feb. 25. . . . **the drawing center**, 35 Wooster St.: Works on paper by nine artists. Through Feb. 11. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **thorp**, 103 Prince St.: An exhibit called "Epiphanies," which includes the work of Ellen Phelan, Morris Graves, and Odd Nerdrum. Through Feb. 25.

OTHER GALLERIES

Mia Westerlund Roosen—Two floor sculptures made of concrete disks wrapped in sheets of lead. Through Feb. 2. (Burgin, 270 Lafayette St.)

P.S. 1—Can a baroque-era theatrical concept serve twentieth-century art-exhibition purposes? The answer may be found in "Theater-garden Bestiarium," a floor-wide installation of commissioned works by thirteen artists, which includes fountains, a gazebo, a lawn, a mirrored grotto, and films. Through March 12. (46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

Group Show—Paintings by Ross Bleckner, James Nares, and Carl Affarian, among others, which were inspired by Bruce Chatwin's book "Songlines." Through Feb. 11. (Klein, 611 Broadway.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

John Coplans—Views of the artist's hands. Through Feb. 11. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

Elliott Erwitt—A retrospective comprising some hundred and fifty prints. Through March 12. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Oliver Gagliani—A retrospective. Through Feb. 18. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Larry Johnson—Large photographic works incorporating texts. Through Feb. 4. (303 Gallery, temporary entrance at 127 Spring St.)

Josef Koudelka—Recent photographs taken in Eastern European cities, and earlier prints of Gypsies. Through March 4. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

Group Show—Photographs of gardens by twenty-five photographers, including André Kertész, Elliott Erwitt, Carmen Quesada, and Sylvia Plachy. Through Feb. 15. (Twining, 568 Broadway.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The Georgia O'Keeffe exhibit. Through Feb. 5. . . . ¶ A show of Sienese Renaissance paintings and manuscript illuminations, including sets of narrative panel paintings which were split up long ago. Among the reunited works are six panels from the Sassetta altarpiece commissioned by the wool merchants' guild. Through March 19. . . . ¶ All the Ingres works in the collections (ten paintings, twenty-two drawings, and seven prints) have been put on view. Through March 19. . . . ¶ The first public exhibition of prints from William Henry Fox Talbot's "Pencil of Nature," the first book illustrated with photographs (each photograph was actually put in by hand). Through April 9. . . . ¶ The Costume Institute is exhibiting eighty-five outfits from the Victorian era. Through April 16. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—The

Andy Warhol retrospective will open Feb. 6. . . . ¶ A show of Walker Evans photographs, most of which appeared in the recently reissued book "American Photographs." Through April 11. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed until Feb. 11.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A show of American folk art from the center in Williamsburg, Virginia, that is named for Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, whose landmark collection, started in the twenties, identified and brought to public attention such painters (all represented here) as Ammi Phillips, Erastus Salisbury Field, and John Brewster, Jr. Also, carvings, furniture, textiles, and pottery. Through April 2. . . . ¶ A retrospective of works by Frederick Kiesler (1890-1965), an architect and designer of gallery exhibitions, theatrical sets, and department-store windows. Reconstructed here is his 1942 Surrealist room, designed for Peggy Guggenheim's gallery Art of This Century, in which the objects on view could be touched. Through April 16. A complementary show is at Jason McCoy, 19 E. 71st St. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A display of lacquerware from China, Japan, Korea, Burma, Thailand, and Iran. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—The new Hall of South American Peoples reconstructs, from two perspectives, life before the arrival of Europeans. Archeological remains (carved-and-painted ceramic vessels, gold masks) represent Andean rituals, and ethnographic materials (feather headdresses, baskets, hunting implements) illustrate the everyday routines of Amazonian Indian tribes. Each section is also enhanced by models, including an Incan city that was unearthed in the sixties, and five different thatched-palm huts. There are twenty-three hundred objects in all. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—An exhibit of furniture and decorative arts in the William and Mary style on loan from numerous collections, chiefly those of Windsor Castle; the Rijksmuseum, in Amsterdam; the Bibliothèque Nationale of France; and the Winterthur Museum. Through Feb. 12. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—An exhibition of a type of lacquered wood carving called Kamakurabori, historically used for Buddhist temple decorations and currently used for household items. Through Feb. 5. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—The golem—a figure in Jewish folklore comparable to Frankenstein's monster—has appealed to artists and writers since at least the sixteenth century and, as this survey makes clear, continues to fascinate today's painters, sculptors, and illustrators, among them Saul Steinberg, Charles Simonds, and Louise Fishman. Through April 2. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—A survey of works by Christian Boltanski, a French artist whose sculptures are like time capsules from childhood. Some of the installations are mounted in darkened galleries, evoking the dimness of the past; one is lighted only by six small clamp-on lamps, which focus directly on photographic portraits of high-school students at the Lycée Chases, a Jewish school in Vienna, in 1931. Through Feb. 12. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Collage paintings by Benny Andrews, dating from the fifties to the seventies. Through Feb. 26. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 415-5440. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Jan. 30 at 7: "Don Carlo," with Margaret Price, Tatiana Troyanos, Neil Schicoff, and Bernd Weikl; conducted by James Levine. . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 8: "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Ann Murray, Thomas Hampson, and Frank Lopardo; Ralf Weikert. . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 8: "Bluebeard's Castle," with Jessye Norman and Samuel Ramey; and "Erwartung," with Jessye Norman. James Levine conducting both. . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 8: "Aida," with Leona Mitchell, Stefania Toczyska, Vladimir Popov, and Sherrill Milnes; Christian Badea. . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 7: "Don Carlo," with Margaret Price, Tatiana Troyanos, Neil Schicoff, and Bernd Weikl; James Levine. . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 1:30: "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Ann Murray, Thomas Hampson, and Frank Lopardo; Ralf Weikert. . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 8: "Bluebeard's Castle," with Jessye Norman and Samuel Ramey; and "Erwartung," with Jessye Norman. James Levine conducting both. . . . ¶ Feb. 6 at 8: "Idomeneo," with Marvis Martin, Carol Vaness, Frederica von Stade, Siegfried Jerusalem, and William Lewis; David Stivender. . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 7: "Don Carlo," with Margaret Price, Tatiana Troyanos, Neil Shicoff, and Bernd Weikl; James Levine. . . . ¶ Feb. 8 at 8: "Bluebeard's Castle," with Katherine Ciesinski and Samuel Ramey; and "Erwartung," with Jessye Norman. James Levine conducting both.

Welsh National Opera—The Brooklyn Academy of Music has assembled a trio of rarely seen, unusual, and far-flung opera companies, and a production of "Falstaff" is the first offering. Conducted by Richard Armstrong. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Feb. 2 at 6, and Feb. 4, Feb. 6, and Feb. 8, all at 8.) . . . **note:** Ticket prices for the Feb. 2 performance may be prohibitive, since the Princess of Wales will be present.

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Hugh Wolff conducting a program of music by Bernstein, Berlioz, and Ravel. With Peter Serkin, piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Feb. 1-2 at 8, Feb. 3 at 2, and Feb. 4 and Feb. 7 at 8.)

Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal—Charles Dutoit conducting. At Carnegie Hall, Feb. 2 at 8: A Debussy-Beethoven-Elgar program, with Radu Lupu, piano. . . . ¶ At Avery Fisher Hall, Feb. 3 at 8: A program of music by Glenn Buhr, Ravel, and Berlioz. With Louis Lortie, piano.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra—Vladimir Ashkenazy conducting, with Christine Cairns, mezzo-soprano. At Carnegie Hall, Feb. 3 at 8: A Shostakovich-Mahler program. . . . ¶ At Avery Fisher Hall, Feb. 5 at 3: Music by R. Strauss, Mahler, and Brahms.

American Composers Orchestra—Stanislaw Skrowaczewski conducting his own work, a première by Aaron Jay Kernis, and William Schuman's Violin Concerto. With Robert McDuffie, violin. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 5 at 3.)

Philadelphia Orchestra—Riccardo Muti conducting Scriabin's Second Symphony and Beethoven's Violin Concerto, with Pinchas Zukerman. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 7 at 8.)

Harmonie Ensemble—Steven Richman conducting, with James Kreger, cello. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 1 at 8.)

Juilliard Orchestra—Otto-Werner Mueller conducting music composed in the sixties. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 3 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

New York Chamber Symphony—Yoav Talmi conducting a Mozart-Hindemith-Prokofiev program, with Rudolf Firkušný, piano. (92nd Street Y. Feb. 4 at 8 and Feb. 5 at 3.)

Clarion Concerts Orchestra—With Joanna

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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MUSIC–Cont'd

Simon, mezzo-soprano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 7 at 8.)

Requiems—Appropriate to this wintry season. . . . ¶ Verdi's will be performed by the Collegiate Chorale, under the direction of Robert Bass. With Sharon Sweet, soprano; Diane Curry, mezzo-soprano; Vinson Cole, tenor; and Paul Plishka, bass. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 4 at 8.) . . . ¶ Maurice Duruflé's will be performed by the Goodman Chamber Choir and the combined choirs of St. Anthony's Church and the Church of St. Anastasia, under the direction of Andrea Goodman. (St. Anthony's Church, 154 Sullivan St., at W. Houston St. Feb. 5 at 3. Admission by contribution.) . . . ¶ Brahms' will be performed by the Ascension Choir, under the direction of Dennis Keene. With Beverly Myers, soprano; Roger Roloff, baritone; and Myron McPherson and Neal Goren, piano. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. Feb. 5 at 8. Admission by contribution.)

RECITALS

Emanuel Ax and Yo-Yo Ma—Piano and cello, performing works by Stravinsky, Brahms, Chopin, and Lutoslawski. (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 31 at 8.)

Tashi—This chamber ensemble of renowned musicians will, in the spirit of *Hausmusik,* choose pieces for their program on the night of the concert. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Jan. 31 at 8.)

Barbara Nissman—Piano, in the last of her three-concert series of the Prokofiev sonatas. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 1 at 8.)

Andrew Rangell—Piano, in the fourth of his seven-concert series of all the Beethoven sonatas. (92nd Street Y. Feb. 1 at 8.)

Aurora—With Bente Vist, soprano, in a program that consists mainly of cantatas by Telemann. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Feb. 1 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Chamber Players of the League/ISCM—Performing works by Eric Chasalow, David Froom, Eric Moe, Ralph Shapey, and Claude Vivier. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Feb. 1 at 8.)

Harvey Sollberger—Flute, playing contemporary works, including one of his own. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Feb. 2 at 8.)

S.E.M. Ensemble—With assisting artists, playing four works with strong percussive elements. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 2 at 8.)

Hiroko Nakamura—Piano, in her recital début. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Feb. 3 at 8.)

David Shifrin and André-Michel Schub—Clarinet and piano. (Weill Recital Hall. Feb. 3 at 8.)

Colorado String Quartet—Playing two works by Haydn and one by Schubert. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. Feb. 5 at 2. For information about tickets, call 741-5689.)

New York Philharmonic Ensembles—Chamber music, by members of this city's resident symphony. This program consists of music by Wallingford Riegger, Smetana, and Brahms. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 5 at 3.)

Mitsuko Shirai—Mezzo-soprano, with Hartmut Höll, piano, in a program of lieder. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 5 at 3.)

Alexander String Quartet—Playing Mozart and Schubert. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 51st St. Feb. 5 at 3. Admission by contribution.)

Goliard Chamber Soloists—Chamber music for mezzo-soprano and instrumentalists. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 5 at 8.)

New York Women Composers, Inc.—Presenting electro-acoustic works on tape by Ursula Mamlok, Beatrice Witkin, Margaret Helmuth, Judith St. Croix, Elizabeth Pizer, and Alice Shields. (Merce Cunningham Dance Studio, 55 Bethune St. Feb. 5 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Eugenia Zukerman and Anthony Newman—Flute and harpsichord, playing and talking about music by Couperin and Rameau. (Celeste Bartos Forum, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. Feb. 6 at 6. For information about tickets, call 930-0855.)

New York Philomusica—Playing chamber music by Prokofiev, Villa-Lobos, and Schubert. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 6 at 8.)

Andrés Díaz—Cello, in a program of sonatas. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 7 at 8.)

Chamber Music at the Y—With Emanuel Ax and Joseph Kalichstein, piano; and two cellists, two percussionists, and a hornist. (92nd Street Y. Feb. 7-8 at 8.)

Anne-Marie McDermott—Piano, with Hartmut Höll, piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 8 at 8.)

Benefit Concert—Paul Badura-Skoda playing four pianos from the Metropolitan Museum's collection. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. Feb. 7 at 7. For information about tickets, call 570-3919.)

SPORTS

(The ticket-information number for Madison Square Garden is 563-8300, for the Meadowlands 1-201 935-3900, and for Nassau Coliseum 1-516 587-9222.)

Basketball—At **madison square garden:** Knicks vs. Indiana Pacers, Jan. 31 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Cleveland Cavaliers, Feb. 2 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Washington Bullets, Feb. 7 at 7:30. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena:** Nets vs. Seattle Supersonics, Feb. 7 at 7:30.

Hockey—At **madison square garden:** Rangers vs. Islanders, Jan. 30 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Washington Capitals, Feb. 1 at 7:30. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Minnesota North Stars, Feb. 5 at 7:30. . . . **nassau coliseum:** Islanders vs. Toronto Maple Leafs, Feb. 2 at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Hartford Whalers, Feb. 4 at 5:05.

Racing—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30.

Track Meet—Panasonic Millrose Games. (Madison Square Garden. Feb. 3 at 6.)

Trotting—At **yonkers raceway:** Weeknights at 8. . . . **meadowlands:** Nightly at 7:30.

ET ALIA

Prose Readings—Christine Baranski, Diane Venora, Tandy Cronyn, and Fritz Weaver reading from the short stories of Deborah Eisenberg, Paul West, Mary Gordon, and V. S. Pritchett. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Feb. 1 at 6:30.) . . . ¶ Robertson Davies reading from "The Lyre of Orpheus." (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 645-5848. Feb. 6 at 8.)

Interviews—Ismail Merchant by Robert B. Oxnam. (Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. 517-2742. Feb. 2 at 7.) . . . ¶ Garson Kanin by Marian Seldes. (Celeste Bartos Forum, New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. Feb. 7 at 6. For information about tickets, call 930-0571.)

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24 HOURS
BOWLING
50 LANES

COMING EVENTS

(A calendar for readers who plan a month or so ahead.)

Music—**metropolitan opera** (362-6000): The season continues through May 6. . . . **avery fisher hall** (874-2424): The New York Philharmonic season continues through May 27. . . . ¶ Orchestre de Paris, Feb. 17 and Feb. 20. . . . ¶ Prague Chamber Orchestra, Feb. 26. . . . ¶ London Symphony Orchestra, March 3. . . . ¶ Shlomo Mintz and Yefim Bronfman, March 5. . . . ¶ St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, March 10. . . . **carnegie hall** (247-7800): Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Feb. 10-11. . . . ¶ Alfred Brendel, Feb. 12. . . . ¶ William Sharp, Feb. 13. . . . ¶ Maria Joao Pires, Feb. 14. . . . ¶ Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Feb. 15. . . . ¶ Orchestre de Paris, Feb. 16 and Feb. 18. . . . ¶ American Symphony Orchestra, Feb. 19. . . . ¶ Mirella Freni, Feb. 19. . . . ¶ Philadelphia Orchestra, Feb. 20. . . . ¶ Eugene Istomin, Feb. 22. . . . ¶ Oratorio Society of New York, Feb. 23. . . . ¶ New York Pops, Feb. 24 and March 10-11. . . . ¶ Vienna Philharmonic, Feb. 25-26 and Feb. 28. . . . ¶ Maurizio Pollini, Feb. 26. . . . ¶ Pinchas Zukerman and Marc Neikrug, Feb. 27. . . . ¶ Boston Symphony, March 1-2. . . . ¶ Beaux Arts Trio, March 3. . . . ¶ Jessye Norman, March 4. . . . ¶ New York Choral Society, March 5. . . . ¶ London Symphony Orchestra, March 5. . . . ¶ Opera Orchestra of New York, March 6. . . . ¶ Bavarian Symphony Orchestra of Munich, March 7. . . . ¶ Jean-Pierre Rampal, March 8. . . . ¶ Israel Philharmonic, March 9 and 11. . . . **alice tully hall** (362-1911): Guarneri Quartet, Feb. 9. . . . ¶ Kronos Quartet, Feb. 11. . . . ¶ Emerson Quartet, Feb. 19. . . . ¶ Radu Lupu, Feb. 26. . . . ¶ Christopher Parkening, March 5. . . . ¶ Keith Jarrett, March 5. . . . ¶ Jean-Yves Thibaudet, March 9. . . . ¶ Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, March 10-12. . . . **92nd street y** (415-5440): Concerts in this year's installment of the Schubertiade begin Feb. 16 and run through Feb. 26. . . . ¶ Shanghai String Quartet, March 1. . . . ¶ New York Chamber Symphony, March 4. . . . ¶ Jeffrey Siegel, March 7. . . . ¶ Andrew Rangell, March 8. . . . **metropolitan museum** (570-3949): Guarneri Quartet, Feb. 11 and March 4. . . . ¶ Ken Noda, Feb. 25.

Theatre—Some productions scheduled to open during the next several weeks: "Shirley Valentine," a comedy by Willy Russell, imported from London. Directed by Simon Callow. . . . ¶ "Hizzoner!," a new play by Paul Shyre about Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia; with Tony Lo Bianco in the lead. . . . ¶ A retrospective of Jerome Robbins' Broadway choreography, called, appropriately, "Jerome Robbins' Broadway." . . . ¶ "Lend Me a Tenor," a comedy by American playwright Ken Ludwig, recently seen in the West End. . . . ¶ A production of "The Pajama Game," presented by the New York City Opera. . . . ¶ "Run for Your Wife," one of those British comedies that probably only the British think are funny, written and directed by Ray Cooney. . . . ¶ Mikhail Baryshnikov in "Metamorphosis," a play by Steven Berkoff, based on the Kafka story. Mr. Berkoff is also the director. . . . ¶ Two plays moving to Broadway: "Cafe Crown," recently seen at the Public, and "The Heidi Chronicles," currently finishing up its run at Playwrights Horizons.

Other Dates—Lincoln's Birthday is Sunday, Feb. 12. . . . ¶ Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, at Madison Square Garden, Feb. 13-14. . . . ¶ Art Dealers Association exhibition, at the 7th Regiment Armory, Feb. 15-19. . . . ¶ Washington's Birthday will be observed on Monday, Feb. 20. . . . ¶ Spring Armory Antiques Show, at the 7th Regiment Armory, March 2-5. . . . ¶ International Cat Show, at the Madison Square Garden Exposition Rotunda, March 3-5. . . . ¶ New York Flower Show, Passenger Ship Terminal, Pier 92, March 4-12.

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Slatkin Conducts Russian Showpieces Pictures At An Exhibition, more. RCA *DIGITAL* 154358

Debussy, La Mer; Nocturnes Boston Symphony Orchestra/Davis. Philips *DIGITAL* 115068

Beethoven, Symphonies Nos. 4 & 5 Academy of Ancient Music/Hogwood. L'Oiseau-Lyre *DIGITAL* 115009

André Previn: Gershwin Rhapsody In Blue, Concerto, An American in Paris. Philips *DIGITAL* 115437

Mozart, The Piano Quartets Beaux Arts Trio; Bruno Giuranna, viola. "Absolutely indispensable."–Stereo Review Philips *DIGITAL* 115271

Teresa Stratas Sings Kurt Weill Surabaya-Johnny, Foolish Heart, 13 more. Nonesuch 124748

Tchaikovsky, Symphony No. 4 Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Solti. London *DIGITAL* 125038

Dvořák, Symphony No. 9 (New World) Chicago Symphony/Solti. London *DIGITAL* 115168

Beethoven, Symphony No. 7; 2 Overtures • Royal Philharmonic/Previn. RCA *DIGITAL* 153621

Stravinsky, Petrouchka; more Montreal Symphony Orchestra/Dutoit. London *DIGITAL* 115331

Mozart, Requiem Leipzig Radio Choir; Dresden State Orchestra/Schreier. Philips *DIGITAL* 115039

Pavarotti: Volare Title song, Serenata, 14 more. With Henry Mancini. London *DIGITAL* 125102

Handel, Water Music Eng. Concert/Pinnock. Archiv *DIGITAL* 115306

Rossini, Overtures Barber Of Seville, Tancredi, 6 more. Orpheus Chamber Orch. DG *DIGITAL* 115527

Horowitz Plays Mozart Concerto No. 23 & Sonata No. 13. Giulini conducts. DG *DIGITAL* 115436

Eine kleine Nachtmusik Plus Pachelbel Canon, more. Marriner conducts. Philips *DIGITAL* 115530

The Canadian Brass—More Greatest Hits • Barber Adagio, 20 more. RCA *DIGITAL* 164348

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Rachmaninov, Piano Concerto No. 3 • Vladimir Ashkenazy. London *DIGITAL* 125157

Holst, The Planets Montreal Sym./Dutoit. London *DIGITAL* 115448

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Jan. 31-Feb. 2: "Letters from a Dead Man" (1986; directed by Konstantin Lopushanski; in Russian).
Feb. 3: "Queen Christina" (1934; Rouben Mamoulian), with Greta Garbo and John Gilbert; and "Anna Christie" (1930; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Charles Bickford, and Marie Dressler.
Feb. 4 at 4:30: "The Singing Detective" (Jon Amiel), with Michael Gambon. The seven-hour British television series, shown complete at one sitting, with an intermission.
Feb. 5: "Queen Christina" and "Anna Christie."
Feb. 7-8: "Romance" (1930; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Gavin Gordon, Lewis Stone, and Elliott Nugent; and "Ninotchka" (1939; Ernst Lubitsch), with Greta Garbo, Melvyn Douglas, and Sig Rumann.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Feb. 2: "The Naked Gun" (†). From Feb. 3: "Who's Harry Crumb?" (Paul Flaherty), with John Candy.
Theatre 3: Through Feb. 2: "Torch Song Trilogy" (†). From Feb. 3: "Her Alibi" (Bruce Beresford), with Tom Selleck.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Beaches" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Physical Evidence" (Michael Crichton), with Burt Reynolds and Theresa Russell.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
"The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†).
Theatre 2: "Mississippi Burning" (†).
Theatre 3: "Rain Man" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Working Girl" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Torch Song Trilogy" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Three Fugitives" (Francis Veber), with Nick Nolte and Martin Short.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
Through the afternoon of Feb. 2: "Running on Empty" (†). No evening performances Jan. 30-31.
From Feb. 3: "Her Alibi" (Bruce Beresford), with Tom Selleck.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"The Chocolate War" (Keith Gordon), with John Glover and Ilan Mitchell-Smith.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.
Theatre 2: "Physical Evidence" (Michael Crichton), with Burt Reynolds and Theresa Russell.

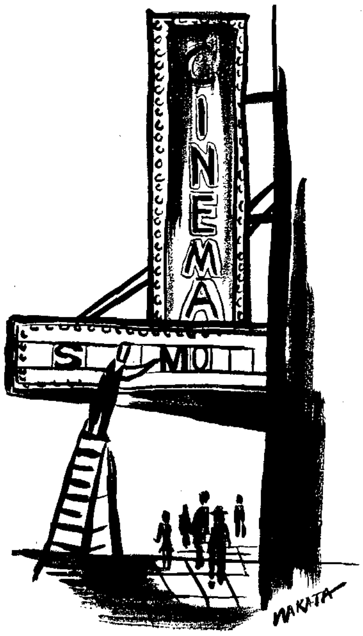
D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"The January Man" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Twins" (†).
Theatre 2: "Working Girl" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Beaches" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).
Theatre 3: "Tango Bar" (Marcos Zurinaga), with Raul Julia.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 2: "The Naked Gun" (†). From Feb. 3: "Who's Harry Crumb?" (Paul Flaherty), with John Candy.
Theatre 2: "Parents" (Bob Balaban), with Randy Quaid, Mary Beth Hurt, and Sandy Dennis.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Talk Radio" (†).



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 18.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†).
Theatre 2: "Rain Man" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Mississippi Burning" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
Through Feb. 2: "Twins" (†).
From Feb. 3: "Who's Harry Crumb?" (Paul Flaherty), with John Candy.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "The Naked Gun" (†).
Theatre 2: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Three Fugitives" (Francis Veber), with Nick Nolte and Martin Short.
Theatre 2: "Working Girl" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays theatres open in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 7: "Peking Opera Blues" (†). From Feb. 8: "Rorret" (1987; directed by Fulvio Wetzl; in Italian), with Lou Castel.
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: A program of twenty-two animated films from twelve countries.
Theatre 2: "Wings of Desire" ("Der Himmel über Berlin") (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Working Girl" (†).
Theatre 2: "Talk Radio" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"Parents" (Bob Balaban), with Randy Quaid, Mary Beth Hurt, and Sandy Dennis.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Physical Evidence" (Michael Crichton), with Burt Reynolds and Theresa Russell.
Theatre 2: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Salaam Bombay!" (Mira Nair; in Hindi).
Theatre 2: "Bagdad Café" (†).
Theatre 3: "Three Fugitives" (Francis Veber), with Nick Nolte and Martin Short.
Theatre 4: "Matador" (†) and "Law of Desire" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Working Girl" (†).
Theatre 2: "The January Man" (†).
Theatre 3: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Beaches" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through Feb. 7: "Talk Radio" (†).
From Feb. 8: "Lawrence of Arabia" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"Torch Song Trilogy" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
Through Feb. 2: "Field of Honor" (Jean-Pierre Denis; in French).
From Feb. 3: To be announced.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Dressmaker" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"The Last Temptation of Christ" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Rain Man" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Pelle the Conqueror" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Feb. 2: "Salaam Bombay!" (Mira Nair; in Hindi). From Feb. 3: "Voices of Sarafina!" (Nigel Noble), a documentary.
Theatre 3: "36 Fillette" (Catherine Breillat; in French).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).
Theatre 2: "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Working Girl" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through Feb. 2: "Three Fugitives" (Francis Veber), with Nick Nolte and Martin Short. From Feb. 3 (tentative): "Who's Harry Crumb?" (Paul Flaherty), with John Candy.
Theatre 2: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†).
Theatre 3: "Mississippi Burning" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Naked Gun" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).
Theatre 6: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.
Theatre 2: "Madame Sousatzka" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Torch Song Trilogy" (†).
Theatre 2: "Physical Evidence" (Michael Crichton), with Burt Reynolds and Theresa Russell.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Dangerous Liaisons" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Feb. 2: "Dangerous Liai-

sons" (†). From Feb. 3: "Kinjite" (directed by J. Lee Thompson), with Charles Bronson.

Theatre 3: Through Feb. 2: "Parents" (Bob Balaban), with Randy Quaid, Mary Beth Hurt, and Sandy Dennis. From Feb. 3: "Who's Harry Crumb?" (Paul Flaherty), with John Candy.

Theatre 4: "Working Girl" (†).

Theatre 5: Through Feb. 2: "Deepstar Six" (Sean S. Cunningham). From Feb. 3: "Her Alibi" (Bruce Beresford), with Tom Selleck.

Theatre 6: Through Feb. 2: "Buy and Cell." From Feb. 3: "The Iron Triangle" (Eric Weston), with Beau Bridges and Haing S. Ngor.

EMBASSY 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

"Three Fugitives" (Francis Veber), with Nick Nolte and Martin Short.

EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: "Beaches"(†).

Theatre 3: "The Naked Gun" (†).

Theatre 4: "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" (†).

LOEWS ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"I'm Gonna Git You Sucka" (Keenen Ivory Wayans), with Wayans, Bernie Casey, and Antonio Fargas.

MOVIELAND, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)

"The January Man" (†).

NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Physical Evidence" (Michael Crichton), with Burt Reynolds and Theresa Russell.

Theatre 2: "Twins" (†).

WARNER, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)

"Mississippi Burning" (†).

WEST SIDE CINEMA 1 AND 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)

Theatre 1: "The Accidental Tourist" (†).

Theatre 2: "Escape from Safehaven."

REVIVAL HOUSES

BIOGRAPH CINEMA, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

Jan. 30: "Ruggles of Red Gap" (1935; directed by Leo McCarey), with Charles Laughton, Mary Boland, Roland Young, Charlie Ruggles, and ZaSu Pitts; and "The Suspect" (1945; Robert Siodmak), with Charles Laughton and Ella Raines.

Jan. 31-Feb. 1: "Advise and Consent" (1962; Otto Preminger), with Henry Fonda, Don Murray, Walter Pidgeon, and Charles Laughton; and "Tales of Manhattan" (1942; Julien Duvivier), with Charles Boyer, Ginger Rogers, and Charles Laughton.

Feb. 2: "Devil and the Deep" (1932; Marion Gering), with Tallulah Bankhead and Charles Laughton; and "Island of Lost Souls" (1932; Erle C. Kenton), with Charles Laughton, Kathleen Burke, and Bela Lugosi.

Feb. 3-4: "Les Misérables" (1935; Richard Boleslavsky), with Charles Laughton and Fredric March; and "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" (1939; William Dieterle), with Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Hara, Edmond O'Brien, and Cedric Hardwicke.

Feb. 5-6: "Citizen Kane" (1941; Orson Welles), with Welles, Joseph Cotten, Dorothy Comingore, Agnes Moorehead, and Everett Sloane; and "The Maltese Falcon" (1941; John Huston), with Mary Astor, Humphrey Bogart, Sydney Greenstreet, Elisha Cook, Jr., and Peter Lorre.

Feb. 7-8: "It's a Great Feeling" (1949; David Butler), with Doris Day, Dennis Morgan, and Jack Carson; and "The Desert Song" (1943; Robert Florey), with Dennis Morgan and Irene Manning.

CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Jan. 31: "A Face in the Crowd" (1957; Elia Kazan), with Andy Griffith, Patricia Neal, Walter Matthau, and Anthony Franciosa; and "A Streetcar Named Desire" (1951; Elia Kazan), with Vivien Leigh, Marlon Brando, Kim Hunter, and Karl Malden.

Feb. 1-2: "Dead Ringers" (1988; David Cronenberg), with Jeremy Irons and Geneviève Bujold; and "The Fly" (1986; David Cronenberg), with Jeff Goldblum, Geena Davis, and John Getz.

Feb. 3-4: "Jules and Jim" (1962; François Truffaut; in French), with Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, and Henri Serre; and "The 400 Blows" (1959; François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud.

Feb 5: "L'Atalante" (1934; Jean Vigo; in French), with Michel Simon; and "Zero for Conduct" (1933; Jean Vigo; in French).

Feb. 6-7: "Modern Romance" (1981; Albert Brooks), with Brooks and Kathryn Harrold; and "Chilly Scenes of Winter" ("Head Over Heels"; 1979; Joan Micklin Silver), with John Heard and Mary Beth Hurt.

From Feb. 8: "Salome's Last Dance" (1988; Ken Russell); and "The Music Lovers" (1971; Ken Russell), with Richard Chamberlain and Glenda Jackson.

FILM FORUM 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays theatre opens in the late afternoon.)

Jan. 30: "Sanshiro Sugata" (1943) and "Sanshiro Sugata, Part 2" (1945), both in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa, with Susumu Fujita.

Jan. 31-Feb. 2: "No Regrets for Our Youth" (1946; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Susumu Fujita and Setsuko Hara; and "The Quiet Duel" (1949; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.

Feb. 3-5: "One Wonderful Sunday" (1947; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese); and "The Most Beautiful" (1944; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese).

Feb. 6-7: "The Men Who Tread on the Tiger's Tail" (1945; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese); and "Horse" (1941; Kajiro Yamamoto; in Japanese).

From Feb. 8: "The Drunken Angel" (1948; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese); and "Stray Dog" (1949; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.

THALIA SOHO, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Jan. 30: "Rose of Washington Square" (1939; Gregory Ratoff), with Alice Faye, Tyrone Power, Al Jolson, and William Frawley; and "Lillian Russell" (1940; Irving Cummings), with Alice Faye, Henry Fonda, and Don Ameche.

Jan. 31: "Harriet Craig" (1950; Vincent Sherman), with Joan Crawford and Wendell Corey; and "Craig's Wife" (1936; Dorothy Arzner), with Rosalind Russell and John Boles.

Feb. 1: "The Mask of Dimitrios" (1944; Jean Negulesco), with Zachary Scott and Peter Lorre; and "Three Strangers" (1946; Jean Negulesco), with Geraldine Fitzgerald, Peter Lorre, and Sydney Greenstreet.

Feb. 2: "The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T." (1953; Roy Rowland), with Peter Lind Hayes, Mary Healy, Hans Conried, and Tommy Rettig; and "Once Upon a Time" (1944; Alexander Hall), with Cary Grant and Janet Blair.

Feb. 3-4: "Picnic at Hanging Rock" (1975; Peter Weir), with Rachel Roberts and Dominic Guard; and "Fitzcarraldo" (1982; Werner Herzog; in German), with Klaus Kinski and Claudia Cardinale.

Feb. 5: Three BBC television films directed by Ken Russell—"Dante's Inferno" (1967), with Oliver Reed; "Isadora Duncan" (1966), with Vivian Pickles; and "Song of Summer" (1968), with Max Adrian and Christopher Gable.

Feb. 6: "The Gang's All Here" (1943; Busby Berkeley), with Alice Faye, James Ellison, Carmen Miranda, and Charlotte Greenwood; and "Tin Pan Alley" (1940; Walter Lang), with Alice Faye, Jack Oakie, and Betty Grable.

Feb. 7: "A Cold Wind in August" (1961; Alexander Singer), with Lola Albright and Scott Marlowe; and "Something Wild" (1961; Jack Garfein), with Carroll Baker, Ralph Meeker, and Mildred Dunnock.

Feb. 8: "The Verdict" (1946; Donald Siegel), with Sydney Greenstreet and Peter Lorre; and "The Maltese Falcon" (1941; John Huston), with Mary Astor, Humphrey Bogart, Sydney Greenstreet, Elisha Cook, Jr., and Peter Lorre.

THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Jan. 30: "A Day in the Country" (1937; Jean Renoir; in French); and "La Marseillaise" (1938; Jean Renoir; in French), with Pierre Renoir and Louis Jouvet.

Jan. 31: "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (1939; Sidney Lanfield), the first of the Basil Rathbone–Nigel Bruce Sherlock Holmes–Dr. Watson series; and "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" (1939; Alfred L. Werker), the second of the Rathbone-Bruce Holmes-Watson series.

Feb. 1: "Moby Dick" (1956; John Huston)

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MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

with Gregory Peck, Richard Basehart, and Orson Welles; and "A Walk with Love and Death" (1969; John Huston), with Anjelica Huston and Assaf Dayan.

Feb. 2: "Romance" (1930; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Gavin Gordon, Lewis Stone, and Elliott Nugent; and "Inspiration" (1931; Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo and Robert Montgomery.

Feb. 3-4: "Casablanca" (1942; Michael Curtiz), with Humphrey Bogart, Ingrid Bergman, and Claude Rains; and "The Maltese Falcon" (1941; John Huston), with Mary Astor, Humphrey Bogart, Sydney Greenstreet, Elisha Cook, Jr., and Peter Lorre.

Feb. 5: "Caesar and Cleopatra" (1946; Gabriel Pascal), with Vivien Leigh, Claude Rains, Flora Robson, and Stewart Granger; and "Pygmalion" (1938; Anthony Asquith and Leslie Howard), with Howard and Wendy Hiller.

Feb. 6: "Throne of Blood" (1957) and "The Lower Depths" (1957), both in Japanese, directed by Akira Kurosawa, with Toshiro Mifune.

Feb. 7: "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948; Orson Welles), with Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, and Welles; and "Gilda" (1946; Charles Vidor), with Rita Hayworth, Glenn Ford, and George Macready.

Feb. 8: "Cat People" (1942; Jacques Tourneur), with Simone Simon, Kent Smith, and Tom Conway; and "The Curse of the Cat People" (1944; Gunther Von Fritsch and Robert Wise), with Kent Smith, Ann Carter, and Simone Simon.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)

theatre 1: Theatre closed.

theatre 2: Jan. 30 at 3: "The Liar" (1980; directed by Mika Kaurismäki; in Finnish, with English subtitles).... ¶ Jan. 30 at 6:30: A program of films by Lewis Klahr, who will be present.... ¶ Jan. 31 at 3: "Rosso" (1985; Mika Kaurismäki; in Finnish, with English subtitles).... ¶ Jan. 31 at 6: "Crime and Punishment" (1983; Aki Kaurismäki; in Finnish, with English subtitles).... ¶ Feb. 4 at 2:30: "Shadows in Paradise" (1986; Aki Kaurismäki; in Finnish, with English subtitles).... ¶ Feb. 4 at 5:30: "The Worthless" (1982; Mika Kaurismäki; in Finnish, with English subtitles).... ¶ Feb. 5 at 2:30: "Hamlet Goes Business" (1987; Aki Kaurismäki; in Finnish, with English subtitles).... ¶ Feb. 5 at 5:30: "Calamari Union" (1984; Aki Kaurismäki; in Finnish, with English subtitles).... ¶ Feb. 6 at 3 and 6: Two different programs of Estonian animation. The animator Priit Pärn will be present at both showings.... ¶ Feb. 7 at 3 and 6: A program of three Andy Warhol films.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 36th St. at 35th Ave., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)

riklis theatre: A program of films photographed by (or directed by) Néstor Almendros. Feb. 1 at 2:30: "La Collectioneuse" (1966; Eric Rohmer; in French, with English subtitles).... Feb. 2 at 2:30: "Nobody Listened" (1988; Almendros and Jorge Ulla), a documentary.... Feb. 3 at 2:30: "Sophie's Choice" (1982; Alan J. Pakula), with Meryl Streep, Kevin Kline, and Peter MacNicol.... Feb. 3 at 7:30: "More" (1968; Barbet Schroeder; in French, with English subtitles), with Mimsy Farmer.... Feb. 4 at 1: "The Marquise of O..." (1975; Eric Rohmer; in German, with English subtitles), with Edith Clever and Bruno Ganz.... Feb. 4 at 5: "My Night at Maud's" (1969; Eric Rohmer; in French, with English subtitles), with Jean-Louis Trintignant.... Feb. 4 at 7:30: "Claire's Knee" (1971; Eric Rohmer; in French, with English subtitles), with Jean-Claude Brialy and Béatrice Romand.... Feb. 5 at 1: "The Blue Lagoon" (1980; Randal Kleiser), with Brooke Shields and Christopher Atkins.... Feb. 8 at 2:30: "The Marquise of O..."... ¶ A program of films about New York City. Feb. 4 at 3: Six short films by Rudy Burckhardt.... Feb. 5 at 3: Three short films by Peter Hutton, who will be present.... Feb. 5 at 4:30: A program presented by Bob Fleischner, who will show five short films, tell some stories, and play the concertina.

warner communications screening room (Wednesdays through Sundays, continuous showings): A series entitled "Video and Language: Video as Language."

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in *either the* **jonas mekas theatre** *or the* **maya deren theatre:** Feb. 1 at 8: "The Earth Sings" (1932; Karel Plicka; edited by Alexander Hammid).... ¶ Feb. 2 at 6: "La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc" (1928; Carl Th. Dreyer; a silent film).... ¶ Feb. 2 at 8 and 10: "Candy Mountain" (1987; Robert Frank and Rudy Wurlitzer).... ¶ Feb. 3 at 6: "Lady Windermere's Fan" (1925; Ernst Lubitsch; a silent film).... ¶ Feb. 3 at 7:30: "Crisis" (1938; Herbert Kline; assistant director, cameraman, and editor Alexander Hammid).... ¶ Feb. 3 at 8: Three films by Warren Sonbert.... ¶ Feb. 3 at 9: "Candy Mountain." ... ¶ Feb. 4 at 5: "Lights Out in Europe" (1939; Herbert Kline; camera and editing by Alexander Hammid).... ¶ Feb. 4 at 6:30: "Greed" (1925; Erich von Stroheim; a silent film)... ¶ Feb. 4 at 9: "Candy Mountain." ... ¶ Feb. 5 at 6: "Carriage Trade" (1971; Warren Sonbert).... ¶ Feb. 5 at 7:30: "The Forgotten Village" (1940; Herbert Kline; codirector, camera, and editing by Alexander Hammid).... ¶ Feb. 5-6 at 8 and 10: "Candy Mountain." ... ¶ Feb. 7 at 7: "Vampyr" (1932; Carl Th. Dreyer).... ¶ Feb. 7 at 8:30: A program of films by Alexander Hammid and Maya Deren.... ¶ Feb. 7 at 10: "Candy Mountain." ... ¶ Feb. 8 at 6: "Isn't Life Wonderful" (1924; D. W. Griffith; a silent film).... ¶ Feb. 8 at 8: "The Flower Thief" (1961; Ron Rice), with Taylor Mead.

Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White St. (925-2111)—Jan. 30 at 8: "Landscape Suicide" (1986; James Benning).... ¶ Jan. 31 at 8: Two works by James Benning.... ¶ Feb. 1 at 8: "Body and Soul" (1924; Oscar Micheaux; a silent film), with Paul Robeson.... ¶ Feb. 2 at 8: "Borderline" (1928; a silent film), with Paul and Eslanda Robeson.... ¶ Feb. 3 at 8: A program of films by Shirley Clarke.... ¶ Feb. 3 at 10:30: A program of four short animated films by the Brothers Quay.... ¶ Feb. 4 at 8: Four films by James Broughton.... ¶ Feb. 4 at 10:30: A program of four short animated films by the Brothers Quay.... ¶ Feb. 5 at 8: A program of films by Joan Jonas.... ¶ Feb. 6 at 8: "Ceddo" (1977; Ousmane Sembène; in Wolof, with English subtitles).... ¶ Feb. 7 at 8: "Harvest: 3,000 Years" (1976; Haile Gerima; in Amharic, with English subtitles).... ¶ Feb. 8 at 8: "Njangaan" (1974; Mahama Johnson Traore; in Wolof, with English subtitles).

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—Feb. 3 at 6:30: "Flames of Blood" (1981; Tai Kato; in Japanese, with English subtitles), with Mitsuko Baisho.... ¶ Feb. 4 at 2: "Vengeance Is Mine" (1979; Shohei Imamura; in Japanese, with English subtitles), with Mitsuko Baisho.

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Through Feb. 5: "AIDS Media: Counter-Representations," a program consisting of four films and eighteen videotapes in five different segments. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for film and time schedules and ticket information. Closed Mondays.

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"Television's Greatest Jazz Programs"—Through Feb. 3: Two programs featuring Benny Goodman. Tuesday at 2:30 and 5:30, and Wednesday through Friday at 2:30.... ¶ A series of sixteen award-winning international television programs. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for titles, schedules, and ticket information. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. (757-3100)—"Gone with the Wind" (1939; Victor Fleming), with Clark Gable, Vivien Leigh, Leslie Howard, and Olivia de Havilland. (Jan. 30 at 8 and Jan. 31 at 2 and 8.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St. (517-2742)—One in a series of films on Asia made by German filmmakers. Feb. 3 at 7: "The Daughter of the Samurai" (1937; Arnold Fanck and Mansaku Itami; in Japanese, with no English subtitles).

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Terrence Rafferty.)

The Accidental Tourist—It begins with the numb grief of a punctilious Baltimore travel writer, Macon Leary (William Hurt), whose twelve-year-old son was senselessly shot by a gunman in a Burger Bonanza. Macon has become such a depressed loner that his wife (Kathleen Turner) leaves him. The movie, directed by Lawrence Kasdan, who wrote the screenplay with Frank Galati, closely follows the 1985 Anne Tyler novel, and it's about Macon's coming to life. A fiercely eager oddball (Geena Davis) who pulls him into her bed turns out to be his salvation. The plot construction is that of a screwball comedy of the thirties: poor working girl has the life force that upper-class prig needs. But people talk a formal, affected English that sounds counterfeit and everyone seems catatonic—even the skinny oddball, whose tense talkativeness is as panicked as Macon's recessiveness and silence. But she symbolizes change, and this picture's ponderousness doesn't keep it from affecting some people deeply. It provides a new romantic myth of the eighties—a time of widespread remarriage and hoped-for rebirth. Essentially, this is a dating movie, like Claude Lelouch's "A Man and a Woman," but for darker times, for times of lower expectations. The film's minimal fun has to do with the wry, pixillated family humor of Macon and his siblings (Amy Wright, Ed Begley, Jr., and David Ogden Stiers). The cast includes Bill Pullman and Robert Gorman. Cinematography by John Bailey; the offensive rippling score is by John Williams. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/23/89.) (Murray Hill, Cinema II, Art Greenwich Twin, 57th St. Playhouse, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and West Side Cinema.)

Bagdad Café—After an argument with her husband on a godforsaken stretch of highway at the edge of the Mojave Desert, a fat German tourist named Jasmin (Marianne Sägebrecht) checks into a crummy motel attached to the equally crummy Bagdad Café. This movie, the first in English by the German director Percy Adlon (whose 1985 "Sugarbaby" was also a vehicle for Sägebrecht), is filled with eccentrics who are apparently meant to be lovable. The rather precious conceit of the film is that Jasmin somehow brings the outcast characters together in a kind of extended family; by the end, the Bagdad Café has been transformed into a popular roadside cabaret, with everyone contributing a specialty (Jasmin does magic tricks). The American performers are trapped in a movie that treats them as merely exotic—waxwork grotesques waiting to be animated by a mysterious German touch. Eleonore Adlon and Christopher Doherty collaborated with the director on the screenplay. With CCH Pounder, Jack Palance, and Christine Kaufmann.—T.R. (Quad Cinema.)

Beaches—This movie about the lifelong friendship between two women of contrasting backgrounds—Bette Midler as CC Bloom, a showbiz-crazy Jewish redhead from New York, and Barbara Hershey as Hillary Whitney, a repressed wealthy Wasp from San Francisco—suggests the kind of material that Midler might be using for a takeoff. Instead, it's being played for maudlin soulfulness. After a while, it turns into an all-girl "Love Story," with Hillary becoming ghoulishly pale from heart disease and CC (now a singing star) staying at her side. Through this (slow, slow) deathwatch, CC learns to transcend her self-involvement; she becomes a better person, and—implicitly—a bigger star. If you admired Midler in “The Rose” and “Down and Out in Beverly Hills,” you may want to bash your head against the wall. With Mayim Bialik, who must have been specially created to be CC at eleven, and John Heard. The director, Garry Marshall, shows no feeling for the material—not even false feeling; the script, by Mary Agnes Donoghue, is from Iris Rainer Dart's novel. (1/23/89) (Gramercy, Cinema I, Guild, and Embassy.)

Dangerous Liaisons—One of the least static costume films ever made, and what costumes! The women—Glenn Close, Michelle Pfeiffer, Uma Thurman, Swoosie Kurtz, Mildred Natwick—look as if they'd been dressed by Gainsborough. (Actually, it was James Acheson, who also dressed “The Last Emperor.”) Principally about the erotic power games played by the Marquise de Merteuil (Glenn Close) and the Vicomte de Valmont (John Malkovich), who were once lovers but are now allies and co-conspirators, this first-rate piece of work by the daring and agile director Stephen Frears is alive in a way that movies of classics rarely are. The paradisially beautiful Pfeiffer is wonderfully affecting as the pawn of the debauchers' final game. The screenwriter, Christopher Hampton, reworked his 1985 theatrical version of the 1782 novel by Choderlos de Laclos; cinematography by Philippe Rousselot. Filmed in France. (1/9/89) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 68th St. Playhouse, Festival, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels—Michael Caine and Steve Martin as con men on the Côte d'Azur, in a remake of the 1964 “Bedtime Story.” Caine is the slick, discreet Continental who operates by plan and fleeces middle-aged rich American women; Martin is a happy-go-lucky American spaz in wrinkled baggy pants; he's an improviser, a vagabond who chases after the most attractive young women he spots, and shamelessly, in a loud, whiny voice, cadges meals and a few bucks off them. The movie is mildly pleasant; it has amusing moments and a sunny sheen. The director, Frank Oz, takes such a square approach, though, that the action doesn't absorb your full attention. (Couldn't the women at least have been smart and lusty?) Caine and Martin preen beautifully. At their best, they're like a vaudeville team zapping each other and doing a soft-shoe. But the script, by Dale Launer, who reworked the 1964 script, by Stanley Shapiro and Paul Henning, is such a lazy ripoff of the past that there's not much juice in the roles: we seem to be watching the last pressing of the grapes. With Glenne Headly, Barbara Harris, Dana Ivey, Anton Rodgers, and Ian McDiarmid. Cinematography by Michael Ballhaus. (1/23/89) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

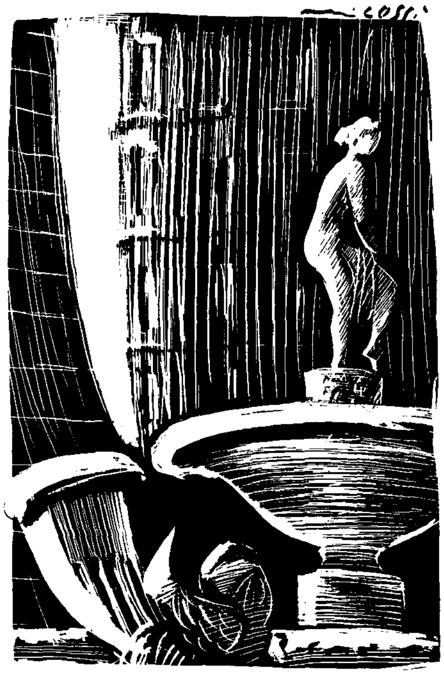
The Dressmaker—The whole cast rises to the occasion—a chance to appear in John McGrath's fine adaptation of the 1973 Beryl Bainbridge novel (published here in 1974 as “The Secret Glass”). Joan Plowright as Nellie, the prudish unmarried dressmaker, and Billie Whitelaw as Margo, the widow with a roving eye who works in a munitions factory, are sisters. The setting is Liverpool in 1944, and the plot centers on what happens when sallow, skinny Rita (Jane Horrocks), the seventeen-year-old niece they have raised, falls in love with Wesley (Tim Ransom), a Yank from Mississippi. This good, inexpensive British movie is about morbid respectability, and the director, Jim O'Brien, makes it possible for the actors to create a maze of claustrophobic subtexts. It's doubtful if either Plowright or Whitelaw has ever before been this scarily effective onscreen; Whitelaw's sky-blue eyes stab you—she seems to have become the nakedest of performers. With Peter Postlethwaite, Pippa Hinchley, and Rosemary Martin. (12/12/88) (Paris.)

The January Man—Not “The Thin Man”—not even a shadow of it, although Pat O'Connor's film, from a script by John Patrick Shanley (“Moonstruck”), tries awfully hard to simulate the charm of an old-style New York romantic comedy-thriller. Shanley's psycho-on-the-loose plot isn't very skillfully worked out (it's like a lesser “Kojak” episode), and it's not an inspired vehicle for comedy or romance; serial killers are much too depressing. The hero, a reluctant cop played by Kevin Kline, is supposed to be a lovable, dashing eccentric, but he's mostly just irritating. The supporting characters, meant to be lively and vivid, are incomprehensible; they shout and glare at each other a lot, and constantly make us feel as if we must have missed something—some crucial piece of information that would explain why they're constantly in each other's faces. To help pass the time, think about the hairdo on Rod Steiger, who plays the mayor of New York. He sports a white, curly mop that looks like one of the disguises he wore when he played a homicidal maniac in “No Way to Treat a Lady.” Is this an homage? A clue? Or just a symbol of the woolly-headed preposterousness of “The January Man”? Also with Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, Susan Sarandon, Harvey Keitel, Danny Aiello, and Alan Rickman; a good cast, defeated by their roles. —T.R. (D. W. Griffith, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Movieland.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8			

The Last Temptation of Christ—Martin Scorsese's film is based on an intense, rather ponderous novel by Nikos Kazantzakis that portrays Christ as a tormented prophet who has to choose between his human nature and his divine nature—who in order to fulfill his role as redeemer must reject the overpowering temptation to be merely a man. If we respond to anything in this movie it's to the idea of Scorsese wrestling with Kazantzakis's conception, thrashing manfully among the tangles of the novel's dense prose, trying to isolate some clear, intelligible meaning from this religious fever-dream. Scorsese hasn't managed to come up with a consistent visual style for the story, and the movie's intensity, over a span of two hours and forty minutes, is sputtering, fitful. The scenes meant to evoke the natural—the human—side of the story don't have much charge, and most of the actors look uncomfortable. (The drab modern idiom of Paul Schrader's dialogue is at least part of the problem.) This movie isn't a sacrilege; it's just an honorable mistake. With Willem Dafoe as Jesus, Harvey Keitel as Judas, Barbara Hershey as Mary Magdalene, and David Bowie as Pontius Pilate. Peter Gabriel composed the music.—T.R. (9/5/88) (Cinema 3.)

Law of Desire (1987)—One of the rare movies that's sensually exciting and at the same time funny. This flamboyantly glamorous homosexual fantasy by Madrid's gagster-artist Pedro Almodóvar is satirical, romantic, metaphorical; it has wonderful jokes and the exaggerated plot of an absurdist Hollywood melodrama. It doesn't disguise its narcissism; it turns it into bright-colored tragicomedy. Carmen Maura, a powerful actress in the manner of the early Anna Magnani, with the trippiness and self-mockery of Bette Midler, plays Tina, a transsexual who has a hot, roiling temperament. Tina's celebrity brother Pablo (Eusebio Poncela) directs classy homoerotic films. One night, Pablo takes home Antonio (Antonio Banderas), a government minister's son, who has been stalking him; by morning, Antonio loves him, is determined to possess him completely, and refuses to get out of his life. With Miguel Molina, Manuela Velasco, and the male transvestite Bibi Andersen as Tina's lesbian ex-lover. In Spanish. (4/20/87) (Quad Cinema.)



Lawrence of Arabia (1962)—If you went to see it under the delusion that it was going to be about T. E. Lawrence, you probably stayed to enjoy the vastness of the desert and the pleasures of the senses that a huge movie epic can provide. Directed by David Lean, from a script by Robert Bolt, loosely based on Lawrence's “Seven Pillars of Wisdom,” this picture fails to give an acceptable interpretation of Lawrence, or to keep its action intelligible, but it is one of the most literate and tasteful and exciting of expensive spectacles. The central figure is played quite stunningly by Peter O'Toole, though he seems to be doing “Lord Jim”—which he was cast in a couple of years later (and then it looked as if he were doing Lawrence all over again). Bolt and Lean turn the hero into such a flamboyant poetic enigma that he is displaced in the film by a simpler hero—Omar Sharif's Ali, a handsome sheikh with liquid brown eyes and conventionally sympathetic lines to speak. As it became apparent that most people in the audience hadn't the remotest idea of what the Arabs and the Turks were doing in the First World War, or which was which, or why the English cared, the question raised by the movie was: can complicated historical events and a complex hero really get across in a spectacle? With Alec Guinness, José Ferrer, Anthony Quinn, Arthur Kennedy, Jack Hawkins, Claude Rains, Anthony Quayle, and Donald Wolfit. Cinematography by Freddie Young; music by Maurice Jarre. (Ziegfeld; starting Feb. 8.)

Madame Sousatzka—As a flamboyant, grande-dame piano teacher of Russian lineage, Shirley MacLaine seems to have entered the Simone Signoret sweepstakes, but she doesn't project Signoret's generosity—she doesn't spill over emotionally. This is, arguably, MacLaine's worst performance. She has flurries of physical mannerisms, but she's tight and held in; she's a wacky witch with frizzy red hair; she could be Norma Desmond's small-town spinster sister. Sousatzka lives in London (in an Edwardian house that is to be demolished) and devotes her energies and her hopes to the most prodigious of her students, a fifteen-year-old Indian boy raised in England—a role played with intelligence and poise by Navin Chowdhry. The blindingly derivative movie is about the boy's breaking free of her, though he knows he'll remain in her debt forever. Directed by John Schlesinger, this is a handsomely mounted production, and the musical community may regard it as a treasure—as the “Red Shoes” of the keyboard. With Peggy Ashcroft, Shabana Azmi, Geoffrey Bayldon, Leigh Lawson, and an appealingly understated performance by Twiggy. The script, by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and Schlesinger, is based on the 1962 novel by Bernice Rubens. (10/31/88) (Metro Cinema.)

Matador—Hugely entertaining. Everything is eroticized in this lush, clownish comedy by Pedro Almodóvar. The characters act out their wildest fantasies—or, like the handsome, wealthy young virgin Ángel (Antonio Banderas), try to act them out—and embarrass themselves. Ángel is training to be a bullfighter, but he faints at the sight of blood. He's such a supreme fantasist that he hallucinates and sees what happened in a recent series of murders—unluckily, he's fantasist enough to think that he committed them. It's

IN BRIEF—Cont'd

all sumptuously sick and funny. Assumpta Serna plays a culmination of the scarlet-woman tradition of Joan Crawford, Rita Hayworth, Ava Gardner, and Anouk Aimée—all those flaming man-killers with their too vibrant smiles. And Almodóvar himself appears as a mad-genius couturier who messes up his curly hair before he appears in public. Also with Nacho Martínez, Eusebio Poncela, Carmen Maura, Eva Cobo, Julieta Serrano, and Chus Lampreave. Written by the director and Jesús Ferrero; cinematography by Ángel Luis Fernández. In Spanish. (5/16/88) (Quad Cinema.)

Mississippi Burning—Set in Mississippi in the summer of 1964, it opens with a fictionalized re-creation of the murder of the three civil-rights workers—James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner—but it isn't really about the civil-rights movement. The director, Alan Parker, treats Southerners the way he treated the Turks ten years ago in "Midnight Express." And he twists facts here as he did there, with the same apparent objective: to come up with garish forms of violence. Two F.B.I. men (Gene Hackman and Willem Dafoe) arrive to find out what happened to the three activists, and a huge manhunt is initiated. The movie hinges on the ploy that the F.B.I. men can't stop the K.K.K. from its terrorism against blacks until they swing over to vigilante tactics. And we're put in the position of applauding the F.B.I.'s dirtiest forms of intimidation. Hackman is superb, and there's impressive work by Frances McDormand, Brad Dourif, Park Overall, Stephen Tobolowsky, and others. But the film is morally repugnant. The script is credited to Chris Gerolmo (Parker says he rewrote it). (12/26/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Warner.)

The Naked Gun—An explosion of sixth-grade humor: terrible puns, broad slapstick, crushingly obvious sexual innuendo, a strategically detonated fart . . . The filmmakers (most of whom were also involved in "Airplane!") are low-comedy purists. The movie could be dopier only if it were longer: its stupidity has a relentlessness and a formal rigor that are practically French. (The scrupulous aesthetic consistency also extends to the cinematography and the editing, which are sixth-grade quality, too.) With Leslie Nielsen, Priscilla Presley, Ricardo Montalban, George Kennedy, O. J. Simpson, John Houseman, and Jeannette Charles as Queen Elizabeth. Written by David and Jerry Zucker, Jim Abrahams, and Pat Proft, and directed by David Zucker.—T.R. (Loews Orpheum, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex, and Gemini; through Feb. 2.)

Peking Opera Blues—This insanely high-spirited action comedy, by the Hong Kong director Tsui Hark, is more like a great game of pinball than like any other movie you've ever seen. It's all motion, color, and noise. Too much is always happening, and too rapidly: if your reflexes are a touch slow, you're out of luck. The plot, which pits stunning young revolutionaries against rotten old warlords and generals in 1913 Peking, is just a pretext for Hark's imaginative action choreography. When it comes to movement, this director has no conscience: martial-arts violence, slapstick, door-slamming farce, and the stylized gestures of Peking Opera are all pretty much the same to him, and the pop-culture cheekiness with which he mashes them all together is irresistible. The movie is exhausting, brazenly commercial, and mighty silly; it's also sweet-natured, unpredictable, and buoyant. It makes you feel as if you were about eleven years old. With Lin Ching Hsia, Sally Yeh, and Cherie Chung. In Cantonese.—T.R. (Film Forum 1; through Feb. 7.)

Pelle the Conqueror—An aging, weak-willed Swedish widower (Max von Sydow) and his young son (Pelle Hvenegaard) emigrate to Denmark and find work on a large estate, where they're exploited and abused. The boy, more spirited than his father, ultimately escapes. The movie, written and directed by Bille August from a novel by Martin Andersen Nexo, isn't as dreary as it sounds. August directs with great skill and feeling, and the cinematography, by Jorgen Persson ("Elvira Madigan"), is sensational. The images are never simply beautiful—they always carry a strong emotional and dramatic charge. Yet there's a basic dullness in Nexo's material which August can't transcend. For most of the picture's two-and-a-half-hour running time, we're moved and bored simultaneously. In Danish and Swedish.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

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Rain Man—With Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise, directed by Barry Levinson. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, and Loews Paramount.)

Running on Empty—With Christine Lahti, River Phoenix, Judd Hirsch, and Martha Plimpton; directed by Sidney Lumet. (9/19/89) (Gotham Cinema; through the afternoon of Feb. 2. No evening performances Jan. 30-31.)

Talk Radio—Eric Bogosian's portrait of Barry Champlain, the abusive host of a late-night radio call-in show, was conceived for the stage, where it functioned as both a star vehicle and an all-purpose big metaphor for Life in These United States. The movie version, directed and co-written by Oliver Stone, magnifies the flaws in the original material. Bogosian's hyperthyroid performance isn't improved by the introduction of psychological explanations for the character's bad behavior: Champlain, it seems, acts like a jerk because he doesn't know how to give or receive love. Oh. And the dark-night-of-the-American-soul metaphor, more than a little dubious in the first place, has been jacked up to an insane, hysterical pitch. Stone and Bogosian have moved the setting from Cleveland to Dallas (presumably more sinister), and have pilfered bits of the true story of Alan Berg, the Southwestern radio personality who was murdered by white supremacists in 1984. There's no sense trying to make anything coherent out of any of this. The movie keeps screaming at us inarticulately, as if it had a terribly important message to get across; after a while, all we want to do is say something rude and take another call. Also with Ellen Greene, Alec Baldwin, Leslie Hope, John C. McGinley, and Michael Wincott. Music by Stewart Copeland.—T.R. (Beekman, and Waverly. . . . ¶ Ziegfeld; through Feb. 7.)

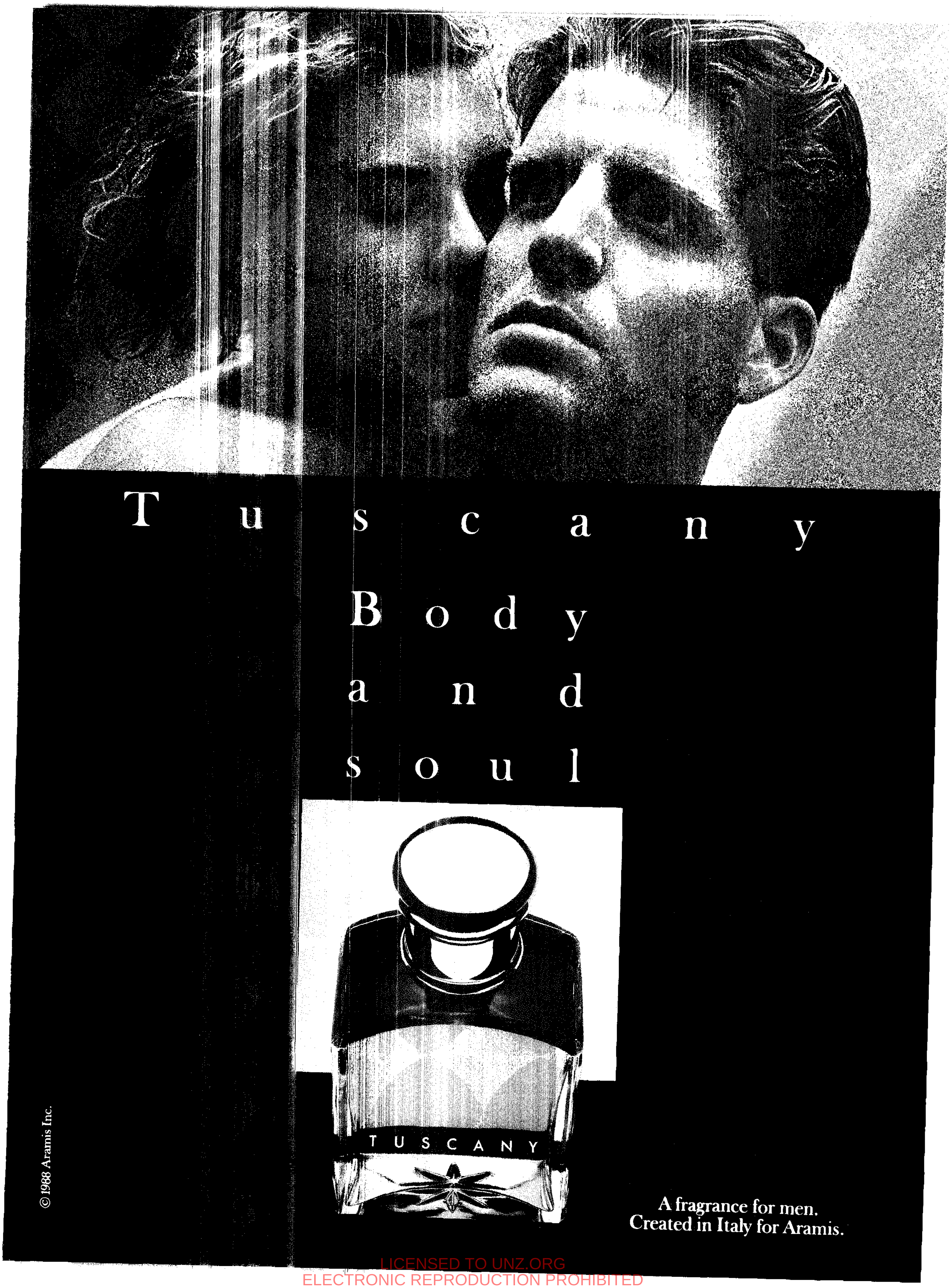
Torch Song Trilogy—Harvey Fierstein's adaptation of his much-honored play means to be funny and touching, but the mixture doesn't come out quite right. This chronicle of the life and loves of a New York drag queen named Arnold Beckoff (played by Fierstein) isn't a very rigorous dramatic construction: it alternates sitcom farce with tragedy, soap opera with cabaret, maudlin speechifying about self-respect with snappy one-liners. Unfortunately, the lighter elements don't play very well in this film version: watching this movie often feels like sitting in a room full of paintings of sad-eyed clowns. As Arnold's mother, Anne Bancroft does some of the grisliest overacting in memory. Also with Matthew Broderick, Brian Kerwin, Ken Page, and, in a small role, the famous female impersonator Charles Pierce. Directed by Paul Bogart.—T.R. (Eastside Cinema, Carnegie Hall Cinema, and Olympia. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex; through Feb. 2.)

Twins—High Concept at its deadliest. A botched experiment in genetic engineering produces a wildly mismatched set of twins: Arnold Schwarzenegger and Danny DeVito. They meet for the first time as adults in their thirties; high jinks ensue. It's actually worse than you'd expect. The screenplay is credited to four guys, and can't even claim one good joke per writer. And the direction, by Ivan Reitman, is so inert that you'd swear the movie was a sequel to something. Also with Chloe Webb, Kelly Preston, and, too briefly, Trey Wilson.—T.R. (Baronet, and National Twin. . . . ¶ U. A. East; through Feb. 2.)

Wings of Desire ("Der Himmel über Berlin")—The director, Wim Wenders, who wrote the script with the collaboration of Peter Handke, has a theme: in an approximation of Rilke's words, "Joy has gone astray." We're told that "when the child was a child" stories held together. Now all we have is fragmentation, entropy. Two angels—Damiel (Bruno Ganz) and Cassiel (Otto Sander)—hover over the bleak, divided city and move among the forlorn Berliners, listening to what's in their minds: listening to the questions about existence that these people ask themselves. Our overhearing what the angels hear—the thoughts chanted on the track, all in even, quiet tones, as grayed out as the sunless skies—works on us like a tranquilizer. Eventually, Damiel falls in love with a beautiful French aerialist (Solveig Dommartin), and gives up his wings. With Peter Falk, who brings some funky warmth to the role of an American movie star, and Curt Bois as a sad-faced old man called Homer. The cinematography (tinted black-and-white, and color) is by Henri Alekan. This Franco-German production is in English, French, and German. (5/30/88) (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown—The most original pop writer-director of the eighties, Pedro Almodóvar is Godard with a human face—a happy face. The artificial is what sends him sky high, and the Madrid of this film is (as the closing song has it) "Puro Teatro." This is a movie where after a while you can't tell sexy from funny. Pepa (Carmen Maura), an actress who works in TV and commercials, turns on her answering machine and learns that she has been jilted. Infuriated, she dashes around, on spike heels, in a short, tight skirt, trying to confront her longtime live-in lover, the elegant, vain Iván (Fernando Guillén). The women of the title include Iván's early lover (Julieta Serrano), his new lover (Kiti Manver), and two (Rossy De Palma and María Barranco) who are involved with his son (Antonio Banderas). Sleek-legged and chic, they run the theatrical gamut. Cinematography by José Luis Alcaine. In Spanish. (11/14/88) (Cinema Studio.)

Working Girl—Mike Nichols made this yuppie Cinderella romance, with Melanie Griffith as Tess McGill, a poor but enterprising girl from Staten Island who fights off the sleazoid bosses and struggles to break through the educational-background barriers and climb from Wall Street secretary to executive. We're supposed to be cheered by watching Tess become part of the establishment. Griffith is very appealing, and she carries what there is of the picture, but this is the kind of star performance in which the heroine's misty eyes and soft-focus smiles (which suggest bleariness) are supposed to turn our brains to jelly. After a bouncy, promising opening, the staging becomes so broad you can't tell whether satire is intended or just dumb jokes. With Sigourney Weaver, Harrison Ford, Joan Cusack, and Alec Baldwin. The script is credited to Kevin Wade. (1/9/89) (34th St. East, Coronet, 86th Street East Twin, Waverly, 23rd St. West Triplex, Regency, and Criterion Center.)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soul
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THE NEW YORKER

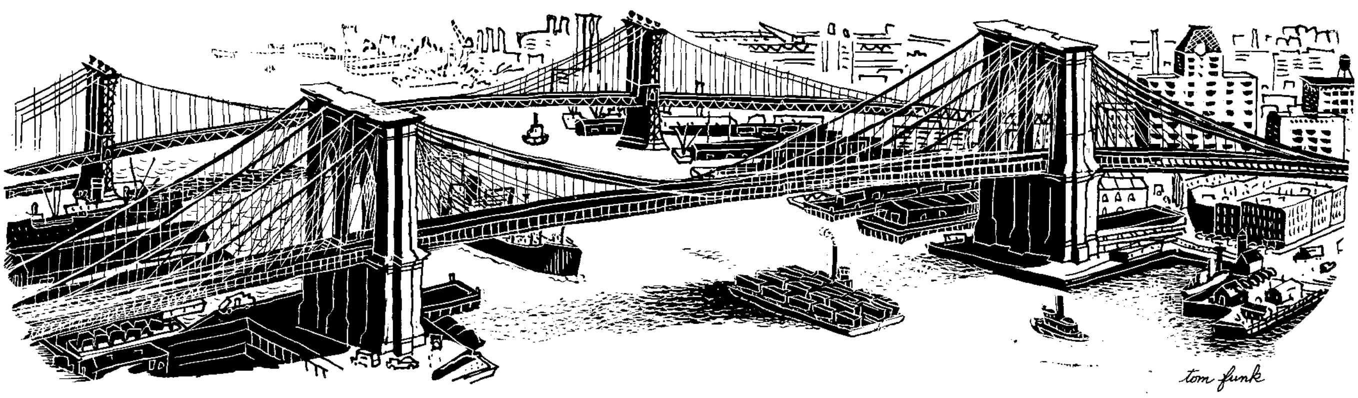
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

GOOD for President Bush, who put on a big, snazzy warm-spirited Inauguration. Unfortunately, we missed it completely, owing to a computer error at the *Times* that held up delivery at our home ("I'm sorry," said the 800 woman, "but someone put two 'West's in your address and it takes five days to correct it") and cut us off from the drumroll of end-of-era stories and it-remains-to-be-seen columns which would have alerted us that the event was near. TV was no help. The nineteen-year-old boy who lived upstairs in our building and understood our big new TV moved out in September, and the picture since then has been Abstract Expressionist except on Channel 13, home of MacNeil-Lehrer, where it's Cubist. We went around in an Inaugural vacuum all that week, vaguely aware that the Reagan-Bush transition was imminent, but something in our head said that Inaugurations take place on Mondays. So on Friday at noon, as the men in dark suits gathered on the Capitol steps and the Reagan era stopped and the Bush began, we were in a rug store on Broadway looking for something to fit a seven-by-fourteen entry hall and were seriously thinking about lunch.

This dumb mistake makes us a little more sympathetic to those Americans whose airhead answers to survey questions (Australia is in Europe, Hemingway wrote "Huckleberry Finn") have made them the butt of newspaper stories about national ignorance and made Allan Bloom necessary. Maybe those folks had things on their minds that distracted them. A seven-by-fourteen room, for example. A room that size is not easy to fit with a rug. The standard rug proportion is 3:4, not 1:2, and the standard patterns tend toward Elderly Aunt, Corporate, or The Primal Vitality of Tribal Peoples. The search for a six-by-twelve rug that conveys reserved warmth and mature good humor and that your tribe can spill on without terrible regret is a search a person can get engrossed in, momentarily losing track of the great sweep of national events. We went to the store and found a Persian rug woven in strips of golden brown and green and so lovely that its odd size, five by fourteen, could not, we thought, be a problem. We bought it. That night, we roasted a leg of lamb and ate it with three friends, who sat around and talked for three hours without a mention of the Presidency. When we sat down to breakfast in a deli on Saturday and saw through the steam from our coffee cup a paper with the solemn picture of Mr. Bush taking the oath, the historic moment was history.

It read like a great day. The gallant old President turning up for a last, silent look at the Oval Office, the walls and desk bare, his eyes glistening. "Tearful, cheerful," said an aide. The quick ride to the Capitol steps and then the thirty-five-word oath of office administered by the Chief Justice, the new President's left hand resting on two Bibles. A twenty-minute speech that was modest and decent, and whose uniting image was the New Breeze that blows away the old ideas of totalitarianism "like leaves from an ancient, lifeless tree" and lifts democracy like "a beautiful kite that can go higher and higher." President Bush expressing a yearning for "a greater tolerance and easygoingness about each other's attitudes and way of life" and concluding with the pleasant line "The new breeze blows, a page turns, the story unfolds—and so today a chapter begins: a small and stately story of unity, diversity, and generosity—shared and written together." Then the farewell to Mr. and Mrs. Reagan, lifted away by



helicopter to Executive One and on across the country to Bel Air. And, finally, the arrival at the White House of the extensive Bush family, twenty-three of them on Friday and two hundred and twenty expected for lunch on Saturday. A picture of the President and Mrs. Bush that sticks with us is one from last summer of the two of them in a big bed full of their grandchildren, and it was nice to imagine the stately old house with a lot of kids tearing around in it.

We were a day late finding out, but the President had begun his term in exactly the right way, giving the country a graceful, happy Inauguration, extending a hand to the opposition, and expressing the love and hope we all feel for our nation. And so we say *hurray* for George Bush, his colleagues, his supporters. (Hurray for the Twenty-second Amendment, which guarantees turnover.) What follows now is the difficult business of governing in a society whose view of government is illustrated by two simple, hard facts: Americans of voting age, 182,628,000; Americans who voted last November, 91,584,820.

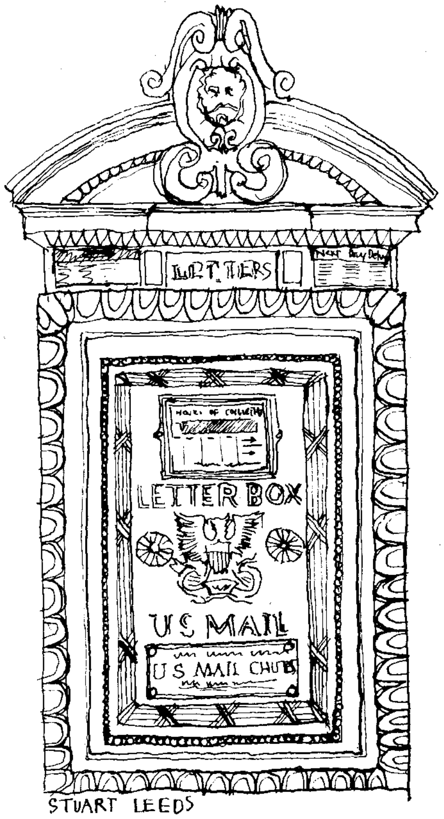
The percentage who vote has been declining for years, from 62.8 in 1960 to 60.9 in 1968, 55.2 in 1972, 52.6 in 1980, and 50.1 last fall. This decline may represent cynicism, lack of interest, or the rising tide of illiteracy, but nobody has ever suggested that it represents satisfaction with the status quo. Another dismal fact is that young people are about half as likely to vote as the elderly are: in 1984, 36.7 per cent (between eighteen and twenty) versus 67.7 per cent (over sixty-five); and, astoundingly, a mere 18.6 per cent of the young (versus 60.9 per cent of the old) voted in the 1986 congressional election. No wonder Congress becomes steadily more isolated and invincible, less democratic, and more and more the secure bastion of privilege, especially its own.

President Bush, in reaching out to his audience on Friday, said, "Democracy belongs to us all. . . . And to all I say: No matter what your circumstances or where you are, you are part of this day. You are part of the life of our great nation." But, sadly, it was not true. Most of the country went about its own life on Friday, just as we did, hardly aware of the pageantry along Pennsylvania Avenue. Almost half the American people evidently feel that government itself is only a distant show, written and orchestrated by a small private club for the benefit of its own members. The press, in its fascination with power, celebrated the Inauguration with reams of stories, endless pictures, but in our carelessness last week we wandered into the other part of the Inauguration story—the realm of the Don't Know and the None of the Above, the large body of people on the outside who didn't vote for anybody.

• •

Born to Paint

THE most beautiful hat in lower Manhattan is worn by the fresco painter Antonio Romano. It has a high, stiff, brimless base and a small, jaunty puff of felt at the top, like a beret placed on top of a cake stand, or a soufflé rising from a ribbed porcelain cup. It is a replica of the hat that one of the Magi wears in Gozzoli's painting "The Procession of the Magi," at the Palazzo Medici-Riccardi, in Florence, and Antonio, who moved to this country from Italy as a teen-ager, likes to wear it at the Broome Street Bar. Usually, he wears his hat with a wide, pleated blue smock, stained with lime dust and lapis lazuli. Antonio owned his own café—the Giotto, just off Centre Street—until his lease ran out: a disillusioning experience that helped drive him back into the fifteenth century. He wears his hat in defiance of modernity, and makes only one allowance for contemporary New York. In the Gozzoli painting, the hat is red, but Antonio's hat is indigo blue. He feels that a red hat might make him look too much like a man wearing a costume.

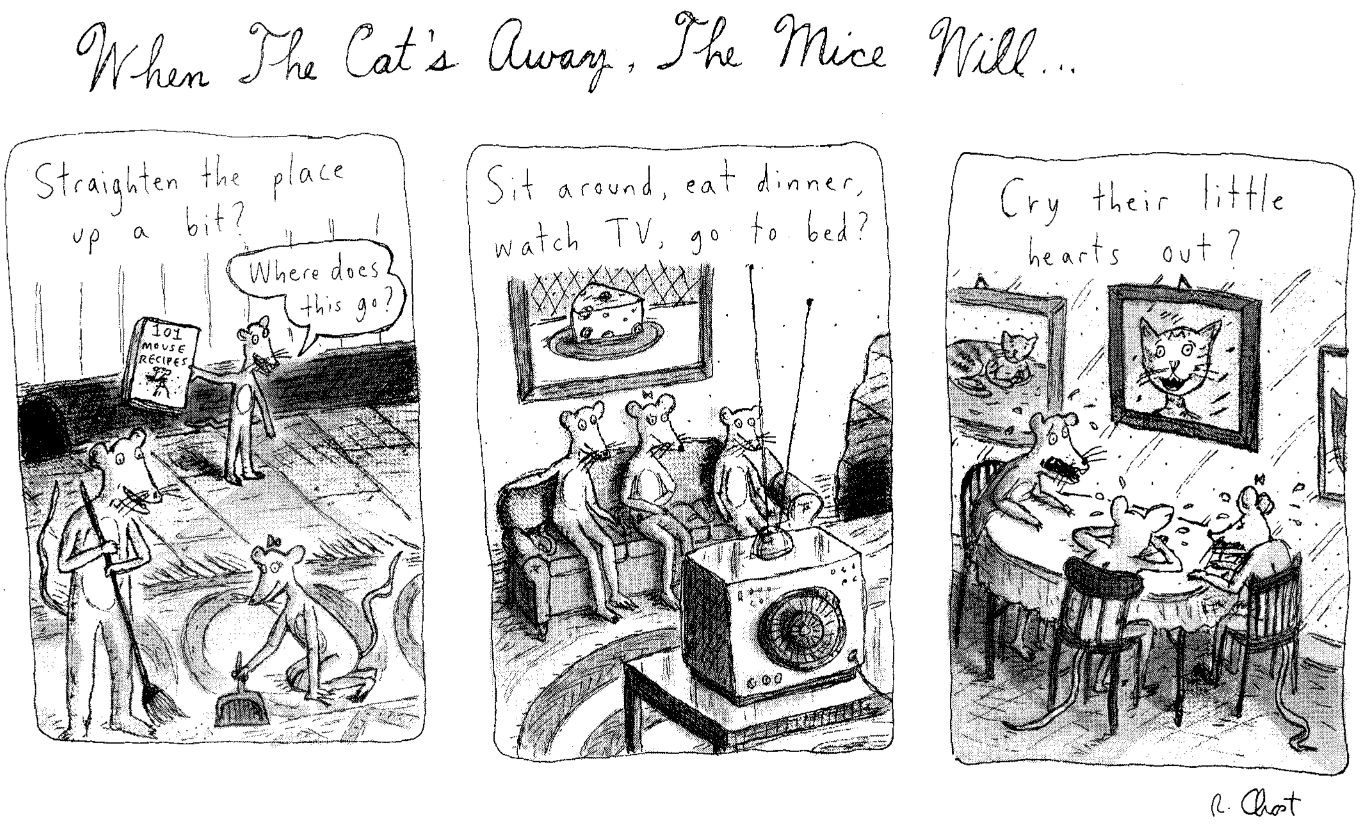


STUART LEEDS

Antonio now earns his living teaching and painting *fresco puro*—true fresco, not mural painting, which is simply paint on bricks, or wall painting in oils, which he refers to contemptuously as "pizzeria painting." *Fresco puro* can be executed only on top of several levels of carefully mixed and trowelled wet lime; it is a technique in which the preparation of the mortar is as intricate as the actual work of painting. Antonio's ambition is to re-create within New York the necessary social conditions for a revival of *fresco puro*. These conditions, as he sees them, are cheap and devoted apprentice labor, a Roman Catholic hierarchy reawakened to its aesthetic responsibilities, and real-estate developers with an excess of flat walls and a taste for religious stories.

For the time being, Antonio's studio is on the fourth floor of a building on lower Broadway. The studio is called La Bottega del Buon Fresco, and it smells of lime, stucco, and pigment. The windows are hung with gathered velvet draperies, and the walls are lined with shelves of painting materials that Antonio imports: volcanic ash from Naples, pigments from Zecchi, orange cinnabar from China, and pulverized marble dust from Carrara. On top of the shelves Antonio has balanced fresco paintings by him and his students. These are portable frescoes, on stucco and wire mesh—a technique that Antonio has helped pioneer. Another velvet drapery hangs from a sprinkler in the center of the room, just above a big wooden table, on which Antonio and his apprentices paint. The drapery is there for those occasions when Antonio, as he foresees it, will need to include nude figures in his frescoes; he thinks that the models will look and feel nobler if they are encouraged to get up on the table and pose against the velvet drapery.

On a recent afternoon, Antonio fin-


When The Cat's Away, The Mice Will...
Straighten the place up a bit?
Where does this go?
101 MOUSE RECIPES
Sit around, eat dinner, watch TV, go to bed?
Cry their little hearts out?
R. Chast

ished off the semester for a class of three beginning students by delivering a retrospective lecture on everything they had learned about fresco painting. On a blackboard leaning on an easel he had written key fresco words: "Cartoons," "Tools," "Transfer," "Grounds," "Arriccio," "Velo," "Colors," "Painting," "Sinopia."

"Please take your places—O.K., if you could take your places," he said to the class. "First, let's review transfer technique. For monumental-sized fresco painting, there must be drawings—always drawings to begin with. In Michelangelo Buonarroti's last show, with Paolo Veronese, which he had in Washington, the drawings were about one to ten in scale." Antonio meant an exhibition of Michelangelo drawings at the National Gallery. (He often refers to the masters of fresco painting as though they were active contemporaries.) Like many *fresco-puro* masters, Antonio has mixed feelings about the Sistine Chapel. "The paintings there were done with nervousness, an aesthetic nervousness, which is not true to the material of fresco," he told the class. "Fresco should be calm, peaceful, serene. But Buonarroti is no pizzeria painter."

Antonio laid out a row of trowels on the table before him. "Some trowels are suitable for fresco, and some trowels are suitable only for something else—what, I don't know," he said. "You find them in the trowel shop on First Avenue but not in the *bottega* of Taddeo Gaddi, let me assure you. This trowel"—he held up a hefty cast-iron one—"must be excluded." He held up a plastic one. "This trowel must be excluded." He went on excluding trowels for about fifteen minutes. Of one he said, "Believe me, this trowel was bought in a store that had no idea of fresco painting in mind. It, too, must be excluded. Look." He put the trowel down on the table and it tipped back onto its handle. "No balance! An exhausting tool to employ! Now, this—this is one of my father's trowels." The trowel in question was, even to an eye untutored in trowels, clearly of a higher order—a light, elegant instrument.

Much of Antonio's equipment and all his technique have been borrowed from his father and an uncle—Cosmo and Felice Romano, who, like generations of Romanos before them, are fresco artisans in Bojano, a small city in the region of central Italy called Molise. At the age of nine, Antonio began a four-year apprenticeship to a man called Pettonato, a dialect nickname that means "born to paint." (Pettonato carried on the indigenous tradition of fresco, painting religious cycles in small churches in Molise.) Antonio's mother encouraged him to continue as an artist, but his father felt that his son ought to enter one of "the noble and emerging arts, such as film, animation, television," and encouraged him to attend the School of Visual Arts in New York. Antonio did, and graduated in 1980. He remains close to his father, and thinks now that his father's discouragement of his career as a fresco painter was a way of testing him. "My father wanted to see if I had the true calling, the true vocation," he says.

Antonio's ambition is to paint religious cycles, but so far he has painted only a few. One is a cycle of the life of St. Francis, painted in the manner of Cimabue, for a Franciscan monastery in Pennsylvania. Another—perhaps the only large-scale fresco cycle to have been undertaken in New York City since the Second World War—is a cycle of scenes from the life of Christ, painted in the apse of Our Lady of Pompei, on the corner of Bleecker and Carmine. In the hope of attracting more commissions, Antonio has sunk a lot of money in an advertisement in the *Official Catholic Directory*. There, alongside ads for Malmark handbells

(“The tone is heavenly . . . for very down to earth reasons!”) and the Serenity Kneeler (“The PROVEN way to end kneeler noise”), is a severe reproduction of one of Antonio’s Cimabue-inspired crosses. But the ad has not really paid off. “Having invented the greatest means of religious and spiritual communication the world has seen, the inheritors of Peter would now prefer to forget the whole thing,” Antonio says indignantly, and, because the expenses of the Bottega are high, he has had to supplement his income by working as a gilder. In Italy, gilding is mere apprentice work, but here in New York it’s all that people seem to want.

“We live in a golden age, yes,” Antonio said recently, sitting, in his Gozzoli hat, at a back table in the Broome Street Bar. “An age of gold that is spread as thin as a fingernail upon squalor and ugliness.” He added that he had recently found a few jobs doing *stucco antico*—faintly colored stucco finishing—for the walls of fashionable boutiques and restaurants. “I could give them anything,” he said. “Scenes of modern life! Climactic moments from the lives of saints! Serene images of temptations and redemption! And what do they want? White stucco walls with little bits of color on the plaster.”

Underground Civility

THE following message was recently sent to Robert Kiley, chairman of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, by Gerald Herman, president of the American Clause and Phrase Association:

> We are pleased to inform you of the selection of “WATCH THE CLOSING DOORS” into our Association’s Hall of Fame BILLIONTH UTTERANCE WING.
>
> SOLE STIPULATION FOR INDUCTION: Conductors may never again caution subway passengers with this remark. Ever!
>
> Forgive our boldness, but may we offer as substitute for “Watch the closing doors,” the calmer, gentler, “Watch the doors closing.”
>
> Our congratulations.

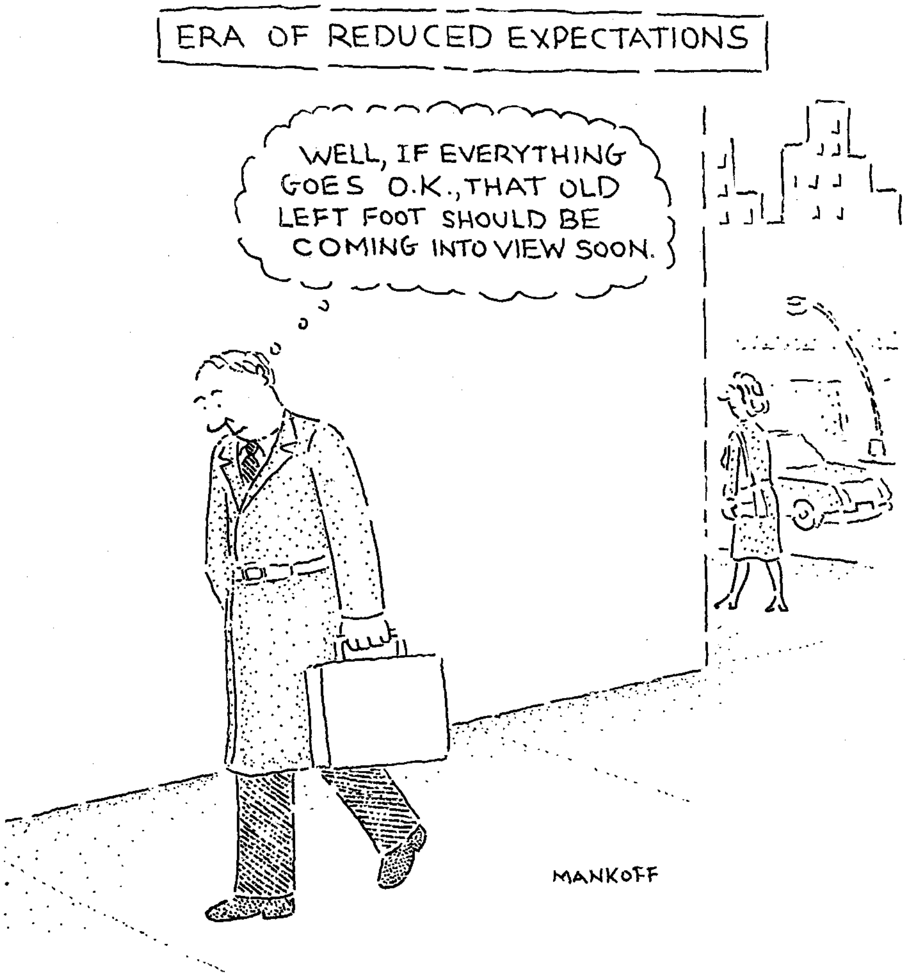
Go

FOUR thousand years ago, the Chinese invented Go. Not quite so long ago, the finals of the board game’s most illustrious and lucrative Japanese tournament, the Kisei-Sen, began at the Kitano Hotel, at Thirty-eighth and Park. Here’s what we saw.

Smoke: But not at the hotel. Because spectators are banned from most professional Go tournaments, we spent some time at the New York Go Club, on Fifth Avenue just below Twenty-third Street—a place where amateur players smoke a lot of cigarettes and play Go. We were there because Michael Simon, a director of the club, was receiving match updates from the Kitano and posting them. Mr. Simon, apparently assuming that we knew what he was talking about, kept saying things like “Of course, three out of the first four moves were star points. That’s to be expected,” or “So far, the game is very high,” or “The *tesuji* is very interesting.”

Black and White: Later, Masanori Izumitani, a professional Go player, used the updates to re-create the match in progress by placing black and white Go pieces on an upright magnetic board. Members of the club sat in front of the board nodding and pulling at their beards and smoking. “Welcome to the Kisei-Sen analysis,” Mr. Simon said. “All of you should feel lucky that you’re here, and not there. The television room at the hotel is so crowded you have to go out into the hall just to change your mind.” Then he explained some of the finer points of the game. He lost us right away. The only things we can say with certainty about Go is that it’s played with round black and white pieces, called “stones,” on a grid, and that it appears to be the kind of game that a computer-chip designer would enjoy fooling around with.

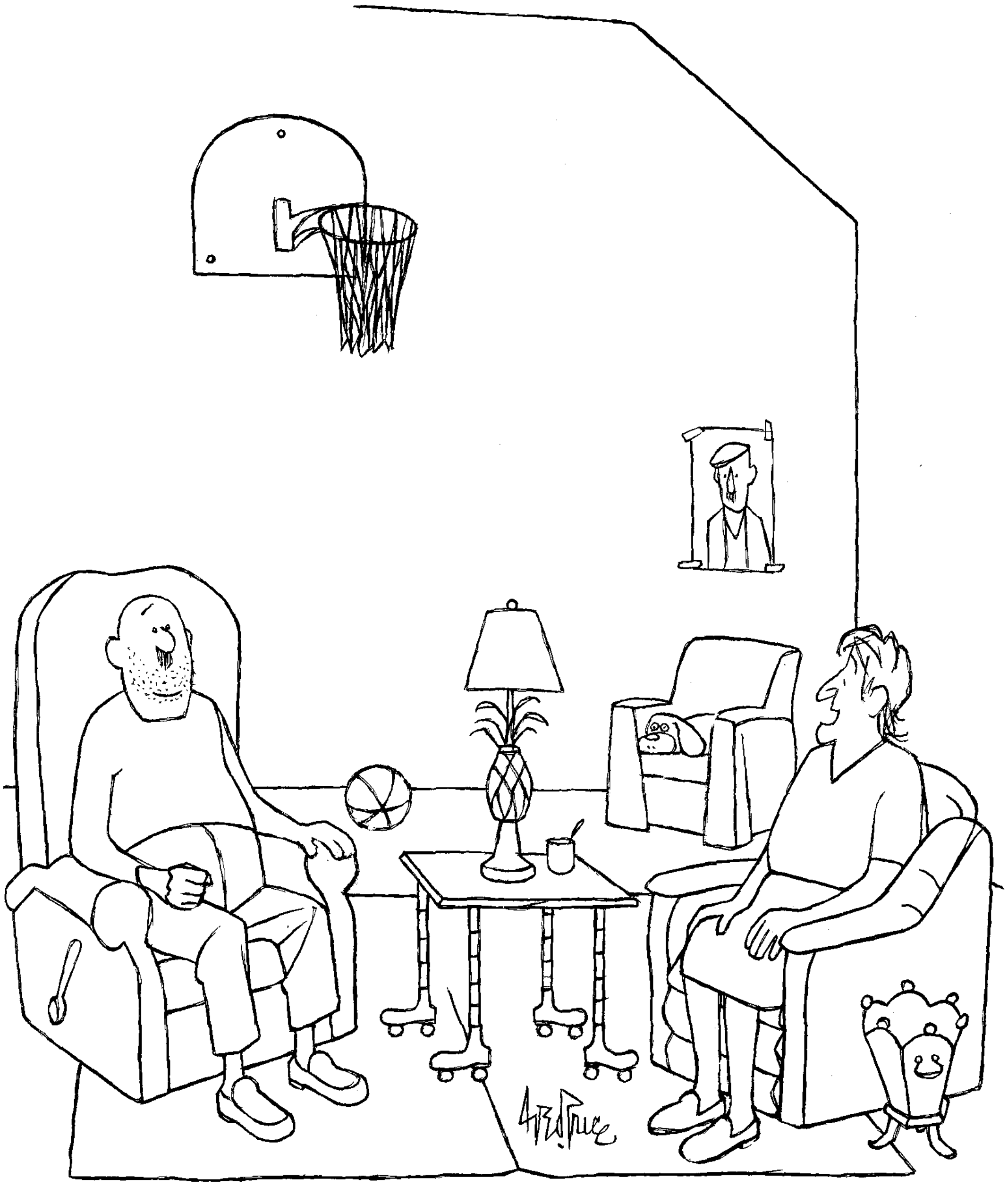
Tension: On the night before the match began, we had attended a reception for the two players in the finals, Koichi Kobayashi and Masaki Takemiya. It’s well known among those who follow the professional circuit that these two don’t particularly like each other. And, sure enough, Mr. Kobayashi and Mr. Takemiya—meeting in front of a flock of Japanese journalists and photographers—had what sounded like the kind of conversation that Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier used to engage in, only in Japanese. Later, over a few *sakes*, a vice-president of the American Go Association, Chen-dao Lin, told us that the two men, who


ERA OF REDUCED EXPECTATIONS
WELL, IF EVERYTHING GOES O.K., THAT OLD LEFT FOOT SHOULD BE COMING INTO VIEW SOON.
MANKOFF

are among the top professional Go players in the world, had always hated each other. "They're about the same age, in their late thirties, and they've been competing against each other since they were children," he said. "Both trained at the Kitani, the most illustrious Go school in Japan. But you'd never know it from studying their matches. They play completely different games. Kobayashi is very conservative, while Takemiya is what we call an 'influence player.' He takes risks. He likes to live on the edge. He'll do anything in his power to drive Kobayashi mad."

DISARRAY: We couldn't keep away. On the second, and last, day of the match, we went up to the eleventh floor of the Kitano, where Mr. Kobayashi and Mr. Takemiya were squaring off in a traditional Japanese tatami room. At about twelve-thirty, Mr. Takemiya, his hair ruffled, his eyes puffy, his glasses slightly askew, walked out of the tatami room and into an elevator. Mr. Kobayashi followed shortly, looking even worse. "Those two look like they've been playing some pretty serious Go," said a cameraman for NHK TV, a Japanese station. We took a peek at the tatami room. It had a disaster-just-took-place-here feel. Empty soda cans and coffee cups and full ashtrays were hard to miss under the television lights. Near a tea-and-coffee station, a referee, a timekeeper, and a game recorder stood in a grim huddle—heads down, hands on knees, eyes moving from side to side. We had to remind ourself that Go is a board game, not a sport—no physical contact allowed.

MORE SMOKE: That evening, the New York Go Club was packed. The match had been over for hours. Mr. Kobayashi stood at the front of the room with the upright Go board at his back. It was time to put the black and white pieces on the board again. We found a seat next to a man who was saving time by lighting a fresh cigarette with the one he was already working on. "As all of you know," Mr. Kobayashi said, through an interpreter, "my opponent and I don't really like each other. This may sound immodest, but I am often polite and he often irritates. It has been this way ever since we were children. The question is: What can be done about it? I'll tell you: Nothing can be done about it." And then Mr. Kobayashi slipped into the Go lingo that had left us baffled all week. Mr. Takemiya wasn't anywhere to be seen, and we assumed that he had lost the match and was on a flight back to Japan. The man sitting next to us set us straight. "Takemiya's not here, because he won," he said, lighting another cigarette. "He's out celebrating, and Kobayashi is in here trying to figure out what went wrong. In the scheme of things, this isn't a big deal, because there may be as many as six more matches to play. Anyway, there's still a lot of Go left. Which is nice. Kobayashi and Takemiya will be able to spend more time together."



"Wanta shoot a few hoops?"

• •

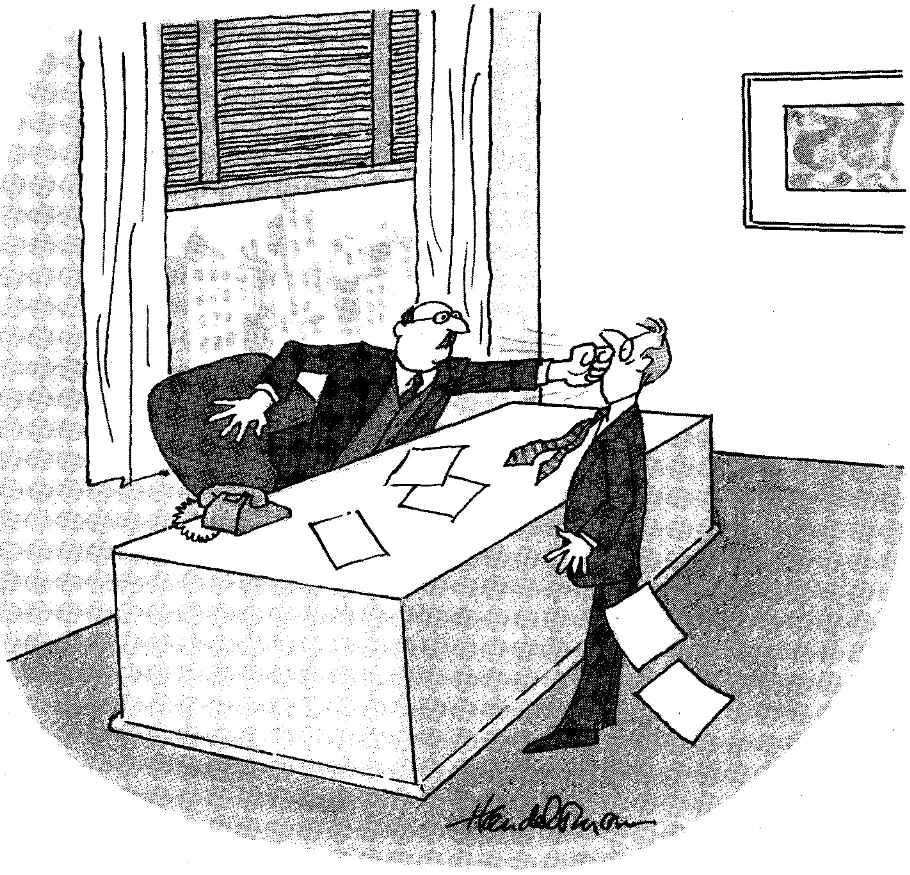
UNO MÁS

FROM the first, Mrs. Drysdale always told her husband that Maria was really *very* good with guacamole and with children. But as the girls grew taller, their eye-level glances made her shy, and she became much less accommodating. Maria was erect and strong, but it was not easy for her to empty a shopping cart in the market. She was a short slab of a woman, straight up and down from all sides, so upright she might be driven into the ground like a stake. Her stocky legs spread like a sawhorse when she stooped in the garden; her crouch in a field of lettuce was that of a halfback. In the house her skirt hung to sweep the floor, concealing her bare snub-toed feet. The tracks she made on the patio tile were wedge-shaped, like axeheads. Her arms were brown as the bark of the eucalyptus, her face resembled a wood shingle pitted with buckshot. It would be a man's face, and a good one, Mr. Drysdale thought, if she had a beard.

In the place she came from, near Oaxaca, she used to make tortillas and wrap them in warm white towels, then carry them on her head to the market in the plaza, still warm. First the slap-slap-slap of her hands, then the slap-slap-slap of her feet—this was how she'd tell the story to the Drysdale children, the "slap-slap" sound being the same in English and Spanish. If the two girls clapped along, the little boy, Peanuts, counted, "*Uno, dos, tres, cuatro,*" in Spanish, stopping at "*cinco,*" a sound he didn't like. If Mrs. Drysdale said, "One, two, three, four," in English, he would smile and clap, but it was not the same.

Peanuts' real name was Arnold Avery Drysdale, after the grandfather who sent him pineapples from Hawaii, but his two sisters and his father—and Maria—all called him Peanuts. It was one of those things that Mrs. Drysdale hoped to straighten out in time.

In a camp for migrant workers north of the border, Maria had cooked tortillas for the children in a hubcap. "*Uno más! Uno más!*" they cried as she cooked. Farther up in California, at a flea market, Mrs. Drysdale found her babysitting some blond children. Mr. Drysdale took their picture, but Maria's straw hat shaded her face.



Violence as a Management Tool

Did she like children, they asked her. Did she cook? Just Mexican food? Mrs. Drysdale explained that she had the two girls in school already but, with another baby on the way, she could use help with the little boy. Once Peanuts clutched the rope of Maria's braids, he would not let go.

Now that Maria was here—wherever "here" was—she did not plan to go back where she came from. She did not like scrawny chickens, squealing pigs, the dawn-braying of amorous donkeys, or the men she knew there, smiling like bandits, good for nothing but making trouble and babies. What she liked was the floor in this kitchen, so clean she looked down and saw herself in it, along with the white bottom of the child she was holding, his hand tugging her braid. Only Peanuts did that, not his sisters, who watched jealously when she bathed him.

This anemic white child had once been subject to scabby rashes wherever the skin folded—a whimpering howler by night, a sulker by day. The family thought it was something in the milk, in the wheat, in the butter, in the paint he chewed on, in the strained baby food they now unloaded on the raccoons and the neighbors' kittens. The sisters had to be careful not to feed him jelly beans, or leave their vitamins where he could get at them. Almost anything might go down, and out, but it often came up. All of that had changed with the coming of Maria. The day she arrived, Maria bathed him in the sink, using the lemon-scented detergent, then oiled him and put him in the basket of wrapped paper-towel rolls, where he slept like a baby. In no time at all he was eating what she gave him, including her salsa-flavored guacamole. "*Uno más! Uno más!*" he piped, his lips puckered for one more mouthful.

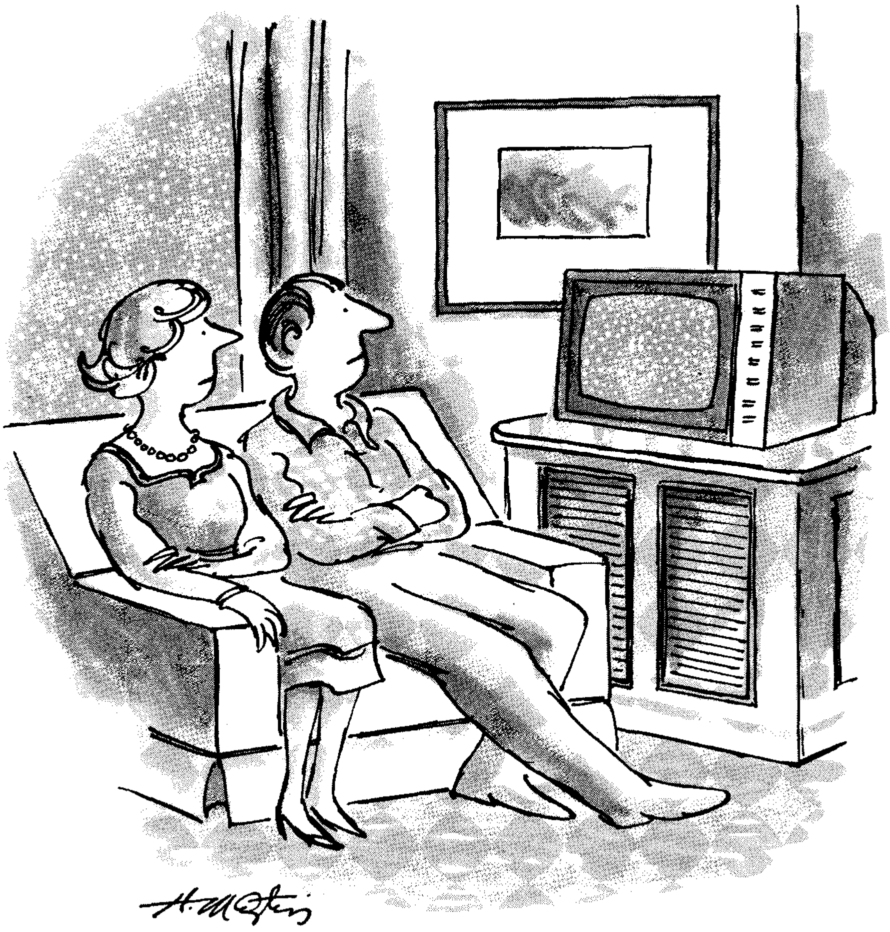
Mr. Drysdale seemed to find all of that amusing. On weekends he made the time to take Maria shopping, because the big shopping carts gave her trouble when pushed and pulled like perambulators: the front wheels would wobble, or not turn at all, never mind which cart she selected. Mr. Drysdale was much better at pushing, but Maria was the better fish buyer, scooping the live lobsters out of the tank of water. He also liked the way she bought carrots with their tops on, and twisted them off at the checkout counter. Nor was it unusual for some of the shoppers to glance from the dark, squat Maria to her tall, pale-faced companion as he stooped to empty the basket. How explain that Drysdale seemed indifferent to the attention—maybe even to like it? Down the aisles, tailing along behind Maria, he saw himself a darker man—not exactly a peon, but one with teeth like ivory and bushy eyebrows, wheeling their brown-skinned *muchacho* in the cart along with the groceries.

Maria did not wear shoes except to the supermarket, where the floors around the freezers were often sticky. Sometimes when Drysdale spoke to her she would say "*Sí*" with no movement of her lips, like air squeezed from a cushion. For "No," a slow, sober wag of her head. He guessed that saying no had once proved to be painful.

Sometimes Mrs. Drysdale would come into the kitchen to watch Maria spoon-feed Peanuts her salsa guacamole, which he would spit out on his plate when his mother tried it on him in the dining room. The little girls were always quick to report that the boy was talking to Maria in her own language. What did he say? He said "*Uno más*," patting his hands together the way she had taught him. Even Drysdale had seen Maria empty the child's overfull mouth with the crook of a brown finger. (This was another thing Mrs. Drysdale meant to get to when she found the time.) And she made the mistake of asking Maria to *wipe* the child's sticky fingers rather than lick them. She did not seem to understand that it was the licking of fingers that both Maria and Peanuts liked.

Uno más! Mrs. Drysdale worried to her husband. Was the child backward in the English language? Would it draw him apart from his pretty, older sisters? And Maria should not, she complained, be rubbing the child with oil, like a chicken; but Peanuts, standing on the breadboard, gave every sign that he loved the slap-slap of Maria's hands on his buttocks. At Mrs. Drysdale's suggestion, Maria did check in the flesh folds for bread crumbs or the corns of black pepper; then a sniff of her fingers assured her the child was clean. His mother turned away.

At unpredictable moments, possibly connected with her current pregnancy, Mrs. Drysdale might stand with her fists clenched, her limbs shaking, her eyes rolling in an almost comical manner. This greatly amused the little girls, but it had no effect on Maria. At first, Mrs. Drysdale had thought she'd like having a real Indian in the house—she felt there was something curative about it, she told Mr. Drysdale—but by now it stopped her in her tracks, like an earth tremor, when she heard the child pipe, "*Uno más! Uno más!*" *Uno más* what?



"*And now, coming to you live—February!*"

SHE was smart enough not to panic, however; she got on the phone to an old school friend in Fresno, who had been searching for a cook and babysitter. Peggy Keeler wanted her own children to grow up with Spanish as their second language. Peggy had married a successful avocado rancher, and lived with her hellcat small fry at the center of an orchard in an old Victorian house with three bathrooms. She needed help so badly that she'd give Maria one of the bathrooms and a TV in her attic room. Could she be sent right away? Had she had all the shots?

It was left to Mr. Drysdale, on the pretext of taking her to a Mexican movie in Gilroy, to actually *railroad* Maria, secretly loading her belongings in a laundry hamper, including the two framed *retablos* with the big eyes that followed Drysdale as he went about his scandalous behavior. In the front seat of the car he forced upon her a wad of rubber-banded twenty-dollar bills as he muttered, "This is all for your own good, Maria!" Not a word, not a shift in her expression even reassured him that she had understood him. But, of course, as the drive stretched out she must have—this five-hour drive that Drysdale would never forget.

Finding the Keeler ranch was like a twilight egg hunt, with clouds of dust tailing up behind the car. The house itself, its top-floor windows blazing in the sunset, was a weathered, many-gabled Victorian with the blue-green ball askew on the tilted lightning rods. Indoors, the hall floors were rug-free to accommodate the rowdiness of the children, three tomboy girls who lorded it over a cowering small boy. The leader of the pack, chewing on strips of a popped balloon, followed Drysdale about, shooting at him with a realistic toy pistol.

Wearing patch-seated Levi's, her graying hair in a pigtail, her lined face darker than Maria's, Mrs. Keeler stood at a smoking range grilling hamburgers. She welcomed Maria warmly in Spanish, however, and poured her a glass of orange juice to take with her aspirin. The two of them left Drysdale at the stove and went off toward the top of the house, followed by the pack of hooting hellions. Mr. Keeler was still out with his tractor, irrigating. From the attic dormer, the small window thrown wide, Mrs. Keeler waved and shouted to the departing Drysdale to help himself from the basket of overripe avocados he would find on the porch.

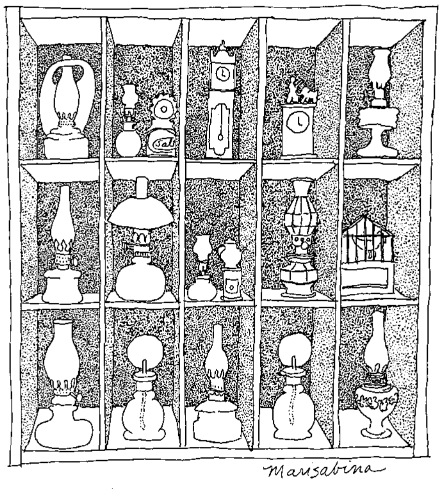
Hours later, in the booth of a diner, his windburned face splashed with water, Drysdale was puzzled to acknowledge that what he felt for the Keelers was envy. That household had been like a bivouac in a guerrilla encampment. He regretted missing Mr. Keeler, whom his wife had called Moosie—surely a bearded, amiable ruffian with forearms like Popeye the sailor's. Well, once Maria was settled in she'd be all right. Drysdale did not generally consider the Third World to be his personal problem, but the settling of Maria—into one place or another—gave him the disquiet of a winner's shame.

HE found his wife in her pajamas, squatting on the floor of the bedroom beside the clothes hamper, in which Peanuts slept with his head down, his disposable-diapered bottom up. Now and then he sobbed, his flushed cheeks powdered with salt. "What a goddam nightmare!" his wife cried. "*You* talk to him. You're his father! I'm not going to let him blackmail me!" She did not look pretty, Drysdale noted, with her haggard eyes and swollen tummy.

After a long, drumming shower, as he towelled off under the beam of the ceiling lamp, it came to Drysdale that *blackmail* implied that something was subject to negotiation. But this would be war, with no quarter given, all quarters taken, and the tireless, life-hungry child would win it. *Uno más:* the only way to peace was *uno más*.

On the phone to Fresno he got one of the hellions, who shrilly hooted, "It's him! It's him!" until her mother answered.

"It won't work!" Drysdale blurted. "I'm dreadfully sorry! It has to be undone before the cement sets!" On the other end of the line, silence. "Hello! Hello!" he cried. Still silence. "I'll be there in about four hours," he said, took two aspirin, filled a thermos with black coffee, and smeared his lips with his wife's ChapStick. In the valley there was fog so thick he had to drive with the wipers flicking.



Mr. Keeler cupped his hands to his face to bellow to Drysdale from the seat of his tractor, the motor coughing. Keeler did not have Popeye's muscular forearms, but a nautical cap with a sweat-soiled crown was pulled down tight on his head. He was one of those tall, consumptive-looking men of the sort who invariably beat Drysdale at badminton and Ping-Pong, the two party skills he relied on to surprise the wiseacres and settle old scores. When they shook hands Drysdale could feel the fine dust on his palms. Noting the sallow pallor behind his dark glasses, Drysdale felt more kindly toward him. "All apologies," he said. "Can you forgive us? Eleanor underestimated the boy's attachment."

To judge from his expression, Mr. Keeler had no idea what Drysdale was talking about. He glanced up to see his wife at the dormer window, waving and yelling that Maria was on her way from the far top of the house to the bottom. She appeared with a duffelbag Mrs. Keeler had given her in place of the hamper. In her calm, unhurried way, Maria paused in the doorway to grip the hands of the youngest child. Before this led to a problem Drysdale

THE SHADOW-LINE

A shadow loon flies from the grassy lake
over mangroves and the freshwater pond
where a lone canoeist casts between the fronds
lying along the water like broken rakes.

He shatters the inky lacquer where the stars
are scattered like a pinch of cooking salt
in the old recipes. It's no one's fault.
The red dot on the tree line must be Mars,

or just a radio tower blinking, blinking
messages two lovers cannot overlook.
Night fish are rising to the smelly hook.
I can't tell any longer what you are thinking.

The shadow of the loon will soon embrace
the shallows of the continental shelf
as night becomes a shadow of itself.
Another shadow passes over your face.

We used to spend summer nights listening to jazz—
rare subtleties of the horn! Now we discuss
surrendering to what will happen to us,
or ought to, or perhaps already has.

—William Logan

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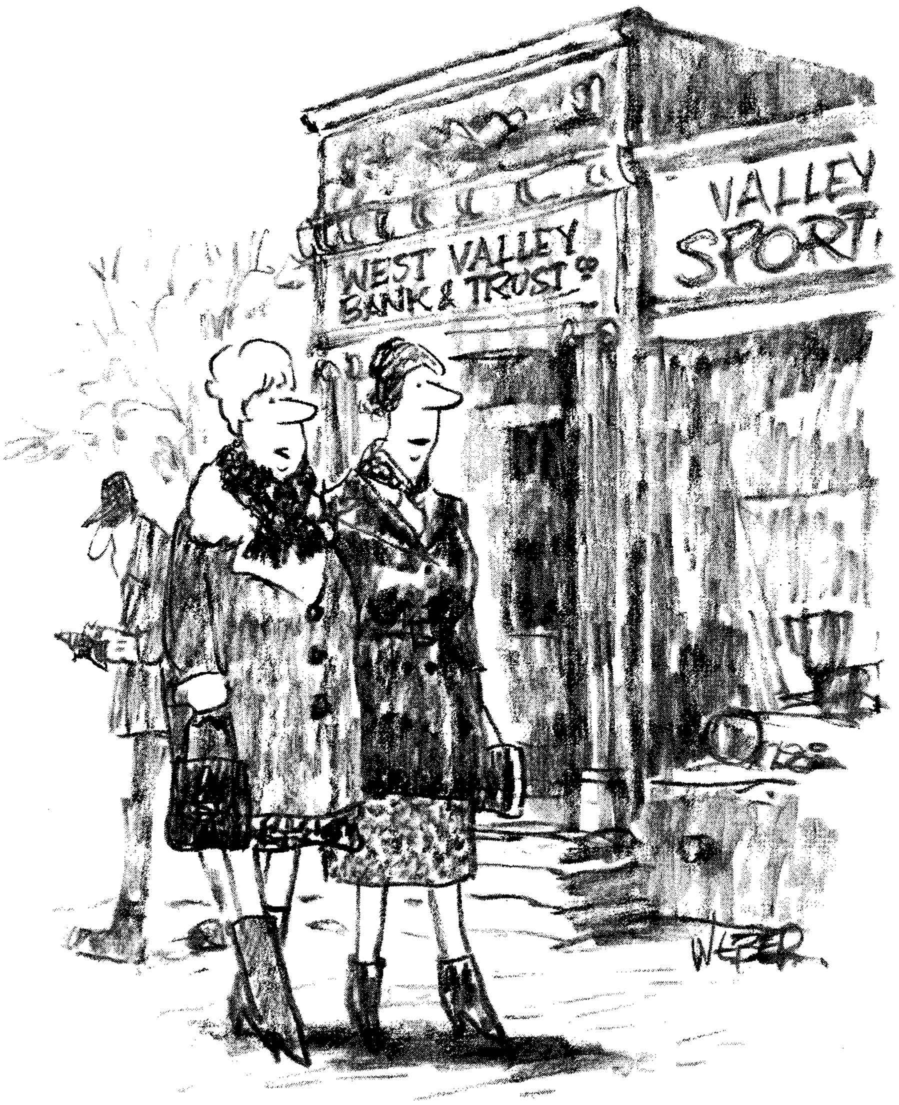

WEST VALLEY BANK & TRUST Co
VALLEY SPORT
WEBER

"I liked Nancy Reagan, but somehow I like Barbara Bush even more."

• •

hurried forward to scoop up the duffel, Maria looking as impassive as ever.

Mrs. Keeler had also given her a shawl, the tassels dangling to the dust in the driveway. No words were spoken. Drysdale could not explain why those moments of silence so aggravated his sense of betraying her, as if he were an unsympathetic relation come to pick her up after a short stint in jail. From the car, Drysdale turned and waved. Maria did not. The tomboys of the tribe ran along behind the car till they were lost in the dust.

For more than an hour Drysdale debated whether stopping for food and fuel, as the signs advised him, would narrow the space between them or increase it. Maria made the decision for him. The freeway rest stop offered shade, a drinking fountain, and two boys wearing ball caps playing catch with an older sister and their father. It was painful to Drysdale to see how the boys let the old man have it. The girl watched them, tilting on her ankles, her long legs bent inward at the knees. Drysdale noted how out of place the father looked in the open, his sleeves rolled, his pants sagging, distracted by a cloud of gnats. Drysdale himself was no longer of an age to roll his sleeves.

The water Maria palmed to her face gave a shine to her eyes. Drysdale looked for some hint, in the mask of her face, that she would let bygones be bygones. What he saw was the way her eyebrows met like wings at the bridge of her nose, and her strong black hair, which Peanuts loved to hold. The girls had hair like corn silk. He was startled by the touch of Maria's fingers on his sleeve, to offer him a green lozenge, which he accepted.

During the last half hour, passing fields of stooped migrant workers, he dialled the radio for the Mexican music that sometimes blew up from south of the border. What he got was a long commercial that kept repeating "Pal-moh-lee-vay"—Palmolive! Drysdale always found a strange language attractive until he puzzled out what was being said. Maria gave no sign that she liked the music, or the soap. She again put her fingers to his sleeve, however, as they approached a van offering vine-ripened tomatoes. The peddler knew her, and held the paper bag as she selected those he approved.

Back at the house, she stopped in the kitchen to wash the breakfast dishes stacked in the sink. He had been about to say, but managed not to, how good it was to have her back. He found his wife in the bedroom again, the shades drawn, watching a wine-sampling program on TV. Out on the deck, in the shade of a beach umbrella, her mother was going through back issues of *House & Garden* for its coverage of a neighbor's house. In the hamper at her side, as if dropped there, Peanuts slept on wrapped packages of paper towels. On the lobe of one ear a froth of suds had dried. A fearless male blue jay, ignored by Mrs. Larkin, pecked at the pretzel crumbs on his diaper. Mrs. Larkin's glowing blue-rinsed white hair stood up about her head as she turned to Drysdale. "What's it all about, Leonard?" She said. "I don't make much sense out of what Eleanor tells me. *Uno más*, *uno más*—what does it mean?"

Knowing that it might well mean something to Maria, Mrs. Larkin paused there as Maria appeared and scooped up the sleeping child. Drysdale was caught by the way her arms accommodated the limp body like a sling. The boy's left hand dangled as she went off with him. "I suppose it's none of my business to ask, is it?"

Drysdale may not have heard the question, or he may not have known the answer. "You ready for a refill, Mother?" he queried, and picked up the tall glass in which ice cubes were melting.

"One more of the same will do," she said. "Whatever it was."

—Wright Morris

MONROE'S WEDDING

Thompson sat on the tractor mower and watched Monroe blow leaves up against the chain-link fence. The sun had nearly set; the sky was a luminous purple and red. They were working on the grounds of the graphics plant, which sat high on a hill. Even from the bottom of the slope where Monroe assaulted the air one could look down on the freeway a mile away. Thompson knew that Monroe was just tired, not actually stupid. But he looked stupid now. It would take them another hour to pull the leaves out of the links by hand.

Monroe started up the hill toward Thompson, carelessly exploding a raked pile before turning off the blower. It was cold, and wind raced through the power lines that streaked the sunset. But Monroe had been working on his feet, with a motor strapped to his back, clearing a hundred-by-thirty-yard area of a full season's worth of fallen leaves. He had taken off his jacket and gloves, and now approached Thompson in a sweatshirt bearing the name of a college he had never attended. "Hey," Monroe called. "I gotta tell you something."

Thompson let him make it all the way to the mower before responding. He kept the vacuum-attachment motor running because of the trouble it took to start it. "What is it?" Thompson said.

"Well. It's like this. I'm getting married. I want you to be the best man."

Thompson stared down at Monroe for a while before chuckling and shaking his head.

"It's you or some joker I can bribe," Monroe said.

"You can't bribe me?" Thompson said.

"You're the best man I know. Besides, you do the paying, remember?"

"Not for headaches."

"It won't take twenty minutes."

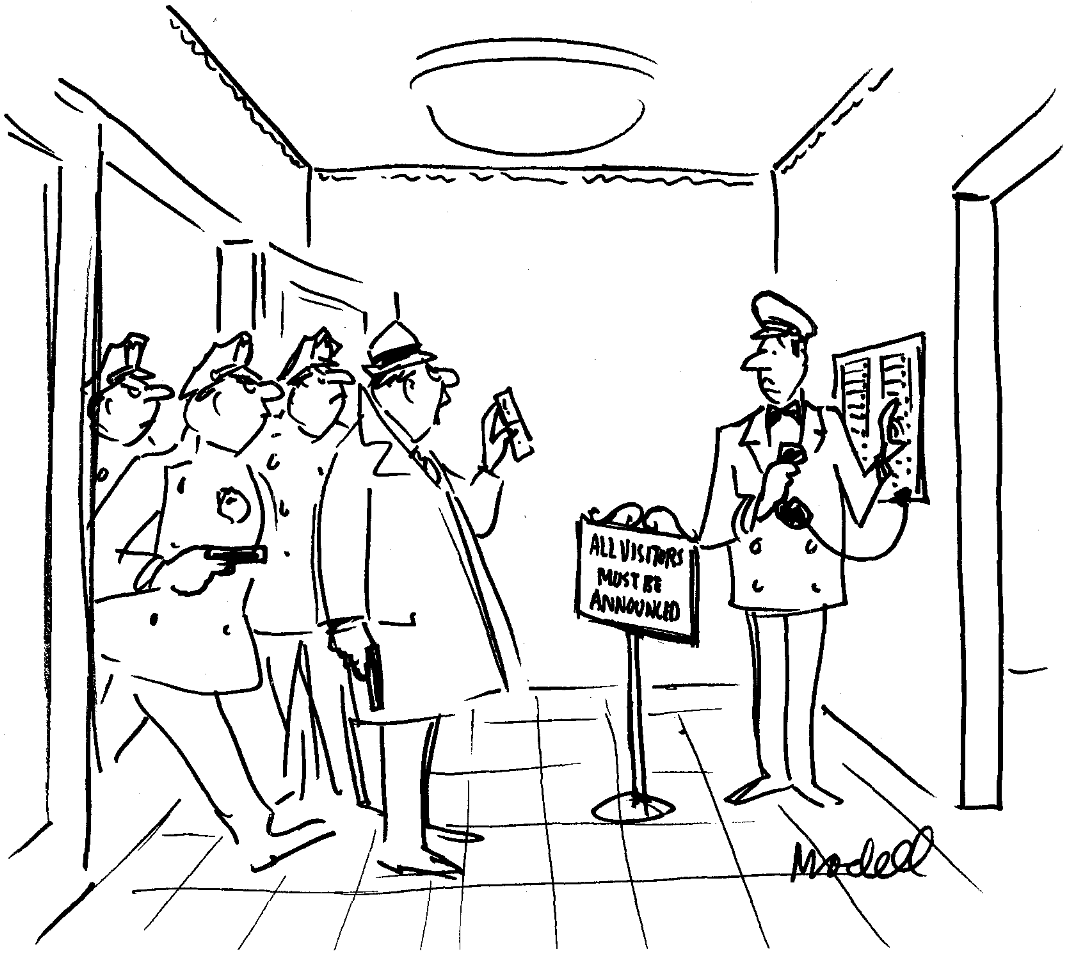
"The fence, I mean."

Monroe looked down the hill. He breathed into his hands and rubbed them together. "Creative landscaping I call it," he said. "I like it."

The next day it rained, but Thompson met Monroe early for breakfast, as was usual during the three weeks Monroe had worked for him. Monroe lived in the Crescent Motel, a place used by truckers and construction workers during the week, and by people seeking inexpensive privacy on weekends. It was on a highway stretch of car dealerships and discount stores, and surrounded by a high iron fence overgrown with vines. Monroe had lived there for two months, since moving from Kentucky to find work in construction. When nothing turned up, he answered Thompson's newspaper ad. His room was on the second level, facing the pool, but Thompson preferred waiting for him in the restaurant off the motel lobby.

The morning waitresses were students from the black state college—Thompson's alma mater of fifteen years. They were attractive young women for the most part, and sometimes he would tease them about their grades, plead for extra bacon. He'd ask about their boyfriends as a way to get intimate. Then he'd ask if they liked children—still thinking about affection, but mostly imagining them as babysitters for his two daughters, who had moved to Alabama with their mother. Next he'd bring out the pictures, and know he'd blown it. He didn't really care. He figured he missed his girls more than he missed romance.

That morning he didn't joke with the waitress who brought over the pot of coffee and cups. He was thinking about how the rain would put him behind on the bank branch he kept up. One of the national vice-presidents was to


ALL VISITORS MUST BE ANNOUNCED
Modell

"Actually, we prefer to be unannounced."

visit the next Friday, and the manager wanted the grounds extra neat. Thompson unzipped his down-filled vest and unbuttoned the collar of his shirt. If the rain slackened, he'd at least clean the gutters. Monroe could take the day off.

Monroe sauntered in and joined Thompson in the booth by the window. He pulled his work gloves from his back pocket and laid them on the table next to the sugar rack. "Boss," Monroe said, "I'm wearing two pair of pants. How many you wearing?"

"We're not going out today. Which is good for you, 'cause you got a marriage to plan."

"I'll live happily ever after. How's that for a plan? You going to be my best man?"

"I guess. If you're serious. When's the wedding, anyway?"

"Sunday after tomorrow. You got a suit?"

"A gray one. I suppose you want a gift, too."

"We need a vacuum cleaner. What's a good kind?"

"I have a round, flat thing that floats."

"Futuristic. Something like that you could get us."

"How about a plate?" Thompson said.

"A plate's O.K. Whatever."

Thompson laughed. "How will you spend this free day?"

"Do I ask you that?"

"No."

"All right, then."

Thompson poured coffee into their cups. "May I ask whom you are marrying?"

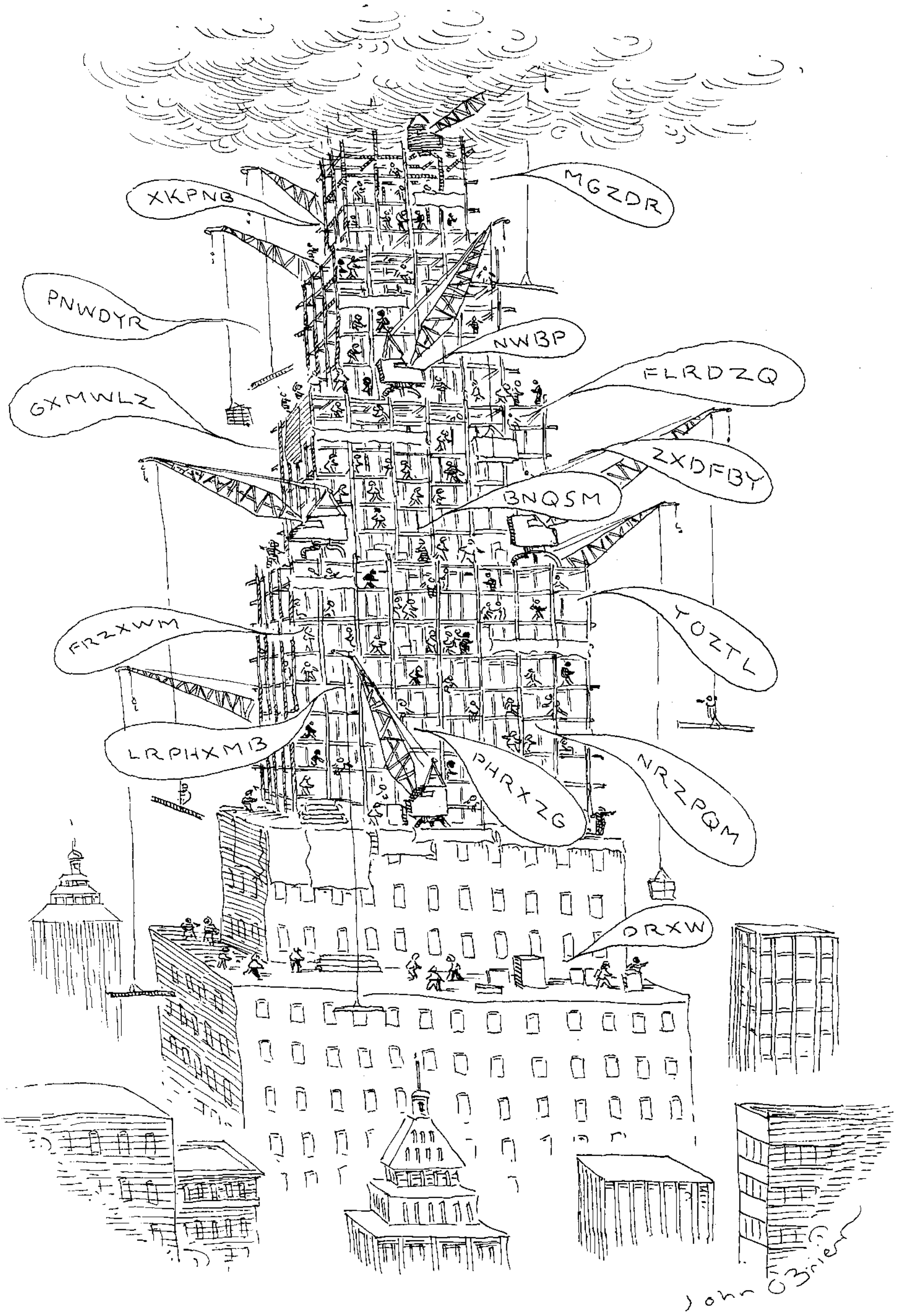
"Carol Dunn, that's whom," Monroe said. "She knows you."

Thompson wondered how that could be. He had been a track star in college, and had his picture in the paper as recently as four years ago when he was inducted into the local Sports Hall of Fame. But he doubted if any woman Monroe's age, which was twenty, knew about those things. Of course, his name was printed on magnetic signs on the sides of his truck, but most likely Carol Dunn was the daughter of somebody who remembered his heyday.

"I'm a public figure," Thompson said.

The waitress came to take their orders. She was majoring in mass communications and wore glasses with her initials etched in a corner of one lens. Monroe asked for corned-beef hash and scrambled eggs, and Thompson wanted a steak biscuit. She asked if they wanted something sweet.

"Shame on you," Thompson said. "We're practically married men."



AFTER breakfast, Monroe went back to his room and Thompson went home to his duplex apartment on the other side of town. The rain didn't let up, so Thompson sat on his green Barcalounger and assembled a new Weed Eater while watching Donahue on television. Thompson had a townhouse maintenance contract in a planned housing community, and Monroe referred to the women they saw on the tennis courts there as Donahue wives—wives who didn't have to work. Thompson's own wife was a hard worker; he had to give her that. She had been a runner, too, and long after Thompson had given up the sport she continued to rise at four in the morning to put in three neighborhood miles before cooking breakfast and going off to haul sandwiches and snacks

LUNAR FROST

The night of the day
that broke up at sunset in a beadwork
of islands, my head
on the hot window glass, which gave
back to me over the highway a face on an angle,
tinted green over white like a lily
or angel leaning down against the car—
it was then night drew apart
like a planet the frost had raked level,
cold, scored, abandoned.

Ghastly,
the stars as we drove
chattered with fear from their stations
far above, unable
to warm us, or each other.

Night journey. The only warmth, from the dashboard
far ahead where the announcer
talks low with my father. They say
nothing that I can hear. In the dark, my mother
quiet beside him with the youngest,
my father has told me to sleep
so he can take his comfort from
the warm controls, hearing a neutral voice.
I am for him another sleepy child
whom he can see, but doesn't, in his mirror,
awake alone.

Yet I have done
what he said to, been kind, been of use,
learned to iron, and save.
And thought. He has told me to think.
So, when the lesson strums forward at school
with a dull breath like telephone poles going by,
I try to expand till my mind fills my body,
even my ankles, even my eyes;
and as I fill with more than I can know—
the thought of number and abstraction;
collective nouns; the beings that were once—
I start to shrink down to the facts.
I tear back all I know till I don't know it,
and I can see the jagged
flicker at the core
prior to understanding,
tearing thought down into pieces
that sit about oddly under a different light,
strange, hard, anonymous.

I question
everything, break the world down
by questions again
into incompletion, as it was
in the beginning:

Why isn't shadow
beside you, your size,
not loose as a stain
that sinks over what's in the way
(these clots of weed and stuttering
of rock along the highway)? Does the soul
of someone who is falling out of life
fall among such things?

Will water
in the desert also stagger
in the light that mimics it, until,
risen from the shelf of thirst,
like Indians wavering in a last gauze
of sunstroke, the fainting rivulets
boil off to sand?

What is the sin for which
these lifeless places are the punishment?

• •

for a catering and vending-machine company. The thought of Monroe's upcoming marriage caused Thompson to miss his wife, to wish he were still married. She'd had the chance to advance in her company if they moved, and he was starting up his own business where people knew him. He had just gotten the big loan to buy equipment. They argued, and she got chummier with her manager, and Thompson got jealous. Within what seemed like no time at all, she decided that the perfect solution was to take the promotion and transfer to Mobile. She and their daughters had been gone seven months.

Thompson's TV began to sizzle. He looked up from the Weed Eater to see a thin, white string of smoke rise from the back of the set and spiral into oblivion. The room held the smell of electric burn. What would the Donahue women do now, he wondered. He decided to take the television to the shop, which would give him a chance to get his suit to the cleaner's and maybe find Monroe's gift.

The dry cleaner's had a drive-up window, and a man in a diamond-patterned sweater said Thompson's suit would be ready on Monday. The repair shop promised to call later with an estimate. So Thompson drove to the mall near his apartment. His intention was to browse Fran's Gifts for ideas for Monroe and his bride, but signs on the rent-to-own store attracted him. They offered easy acquisition of the store's merchandise—painless payments and no credit checks.

There was a mock living room full of striped furniture at the front of the store, and some white washers and dryers lined the right wall. The left wall held three rows of VCRs atop various-sized television sets. A woman smoking a cigarette sat in a glass booth in the back. Thompson scanned the TVs—half of which were tuned to "The New Price Is Right" and the others to a soap opera. The sound was turned down on all of them, and Thompson couldn't decide whether Bob Barker's tie was supposed to be green or blue.

The woman came out and asked how she could help him. She was short and fairly plump, and wore boots and a corduroy dress. Voluptuous, Thompson thought. Her hair was light blond and very fine, revealing a flushed spot at the crown, where a thin curl turned the wrong way.

Laziness? Impatience? When one sinks
into sleep in the garden (where Christ
watches the hour)? What is it seeps
away in the disciple's heart?

Would it be sin to eat His fish
(even *His*) once you see how they are
hauled in, hooked—all the quick
darters, sunfish, bass, rainbow—
through their rough inhuman mail
and hollow stare?

And then,
huddled together at the final hour
as we are here, eyes on the dark
where all the warmth dissolves
and every shape is hooded,
when would the narrow soldiers
realize they would not leave
the garrison? That Santa Anna
must lay his curving sabre
even into the living chamber
of the breast? Does the mind widen
with a wail
for the cold through-coursing
of the gouts of dying?

With these last words,
hooked at the end by my question,
I open to my fear. It is here,
trying to outrun routine in the ever
fainter countries of the lesson,
that I stumble into my smoky blank,
my center—knowing of dying,
a thought I see ahead with a rough
porous rind like a column, abraded and hollow,
that can't even stand in its shadow,
all thinking broken, then worn down to this:
Do you know when you're dying?

When you lie, one night in the cold,
does the ceiling glide open, like an eye
into whose emptiness you start to fall
(though you fall up)? Are you extinguished
like a fleck of burning paper
sucked out the chimney
into a broad lake of cold, where there is
no more fire and the fish
move endlessly away on all sides?

Here is no fire.
Here is a wound
made in me by the smiling metal,
which as I think about it
starts to pour.

In the distance
my father cannot find another station
(I think, The radio; he means gasoline).
We slow through a dead town, the motor breathing;
pull into unmanned places bathed in neon
that purples our mouths
and turns the rusted drums and glass moon-green.
Mother turns to me her brown eyes
and loosened kerchief, but her longed-for nearness
comes like a sharpened stone:
she will die before me—
there is a moment, to come,
when a worse solitude than this
will drift across the acres
where Mother, Father will be forced in fact
to disappear and I to sink into
mere sleep, though I tremble, weep,
and watch the rigid hour
like an iron lung
press shining, around me, their deaths,
which I will see, where I lie frozen,
in the sparkling rearview mirror above my head.

—MARY KINZIE

• •

"My television is on the blink. It sizzles," Thompson said.

"These don't sizzle," the woman said. "And these here can be had for just twelve dollars a week." She waved at a group on the middle shelf.

Thompson bent and stared at the screens. The soap opera showed a young couple dancing together in a large studio. The man was dressed in a black tank top and black tights. The woman wore a leotard that was either green or blue. During a closeup, they seemed about to kiss, and Thompson looked away. He noticed the saleswoman's cigarette, still burning in an ashtray on her desk behind the glass.

"What's the best picture?" Thompson asked. "Look. What color are her eyes?" The couple were now kissing, and though the man's eyes were closed, the woman gazed at him with astonishment.

"What color do you prefer?"

"Yours, actually," Thompson said.

"That would be this one. The green eyes." She tapped the top of one of the sets. "It's remote, too."

The camera shot widened to include another young woman standing in the door of the studio. She wore jeans and a sweater, and clutched schoolbooks to her chest.

"That's the end of that," the saleslady said.

"Yeah." Thompson looked over to a rack of black stereo equipment in the fake living room. The dials were lit in orange.

"You want it?"

"For twelve dollars, yes. I only need it for a week."

"There's a two-week minimum. Plus a week's rent deposit. That's thirty-six dollars I'll need today."

"That's not what your sign says."

"Oh, that's only a sign. It's still a good deal. Come on back, so I can get some information."

She went into the glass booth and motioned for Thompson to go around to the other side, where there was an open counter with two barstools. She stubbed out her cigarette and brought a form on a clipboard up to the counter. Thompson gave her his name, address, and phone number, and told her where he worked.

"What do people call you?" she asked.

"What?"

"On the street."

He thought of names like Slick,

Stretch, and Popeye, none of which people called him.

"Thompson," he said.

Then she asked for the names and phone numbers of three people who knew him. The only number that he could remember was Monroe's. He gave her that, and the names of two men who had been on his shift at the trucking company before it went bankrupt. He'd see them at the barbershop sometimes. They knew he had a business. He wouldn't give the names of clients, or of anybody connected with his track fame, or of anybody he had known with his wife.

The lady went back to her desk, lit another cigarette, and opened her phone book.

"They're probably at work," Thompson said.

She puffed on the cigarette and smiled.

No one answered the first two calls. On the third, she reached Monroe. She asked if he could verify Thompson's information. Then she laughed and said, "I don't know."

"What was funny?" Thompson asked after she hung up.

"He asked are you *renting* his gift."

"Oh. He's getting married. I'm the best man."

"Congratulations." She brought the form back and showed Thompson where to sign. "I trust you," she said. "I'll call the other two later."

"Would you like to go to the wedding?"

She laughed again, in a less spirited way than before. "That's crazy. I don't know either of you."

"You know us better than we know you."

"True. I cry at weddings."

"I might cry myself."

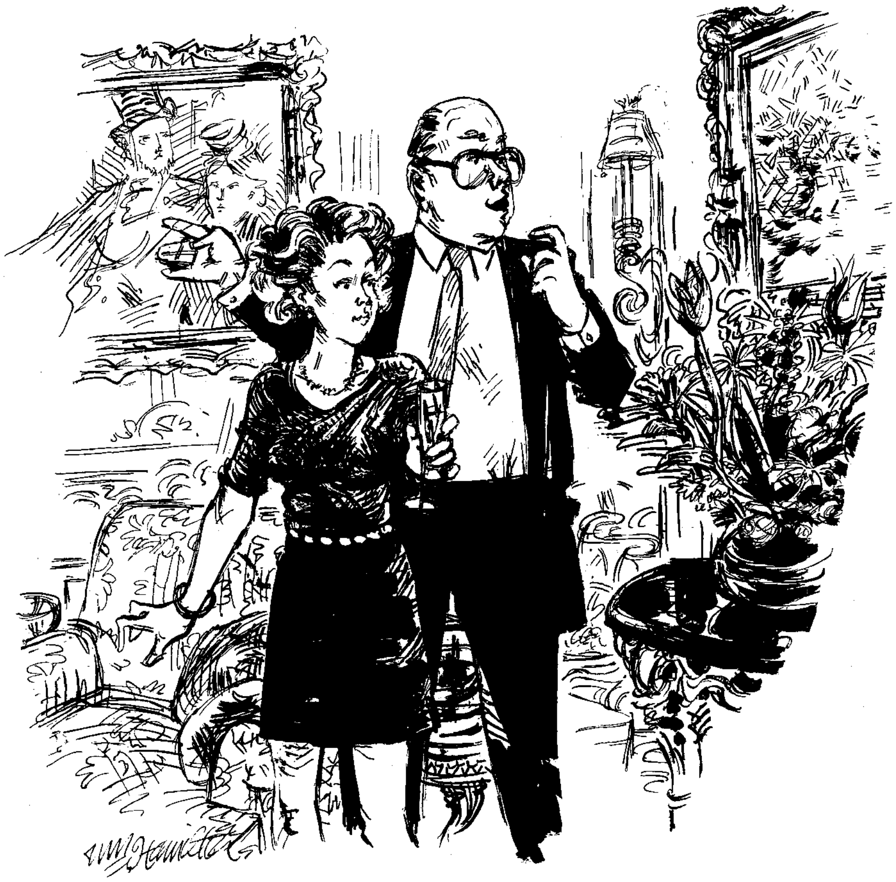
She pulled a Polaroid camera from under the counter. "Smile," she said, as she snapped Thompson's picture.

Thompson blinked, and smiled too late. A man wearing a windbreaker with "Pete" printed on the breast pocket pushed a dolly into the store. The lady fanned the photograph and looked at it. "It's almost you," she said.

The man stood the dolly beside Thompson. "What's up?" he said.

"I've just been arrested," Thompson said.

"Not yet," the lady said. "Pete, Thompson here has a TV that needs to go out." She handed Thompson the picture and came out of the booth to show Pete the right television.



"No, wait. I always get this mixed up. The Manet was five point nine. The Monet was three flat."

Thompson's picture looked the same as usual—stone-faced, his head held too high, his Adam's apple too big.

She returned to take the photograph from Thompson and staple it to the form. "I need the money in cash," she said. "Your next payment in two weeks."

Thompson gave her the money and led Pete to his truck. Then he trotted to the gift shop and bought Monroe an ironstone tureen.

THE following week, Thompson and Monroe worked a few private lawns, the bank, and the town houses. Each day, Monroe grew more excited about his coming marriage. Tuesday, Thompson learned about Carol Dunn, the bride. She drove a truck for the catering firm that his wife worked for. Monroe had met her at one of the motel vending machines, and she had met Thompson at a company picnic. Thompson still didn't remember her, but he remembered those picnics. His wife would inevitably say something to embarrass him. He could not be completely upset with her, since she'd be boasting about him. But what she said was personal and exaggerated—like her comment to a group of women about his stamina in bed being as good as his stamina on the track. He wondered whether Carol Dunn had been in that group.

By Wednesday, Monroe had moved to the honeymoon suite. At breakfast, he told Thompson about the round, revolving bed and its red satin cover. He also described his suit, which was powder blue and had shoes and a tie to match. The wedding would be in the auditorium of Thompson's alma mater, with a reception to follow at the student union.

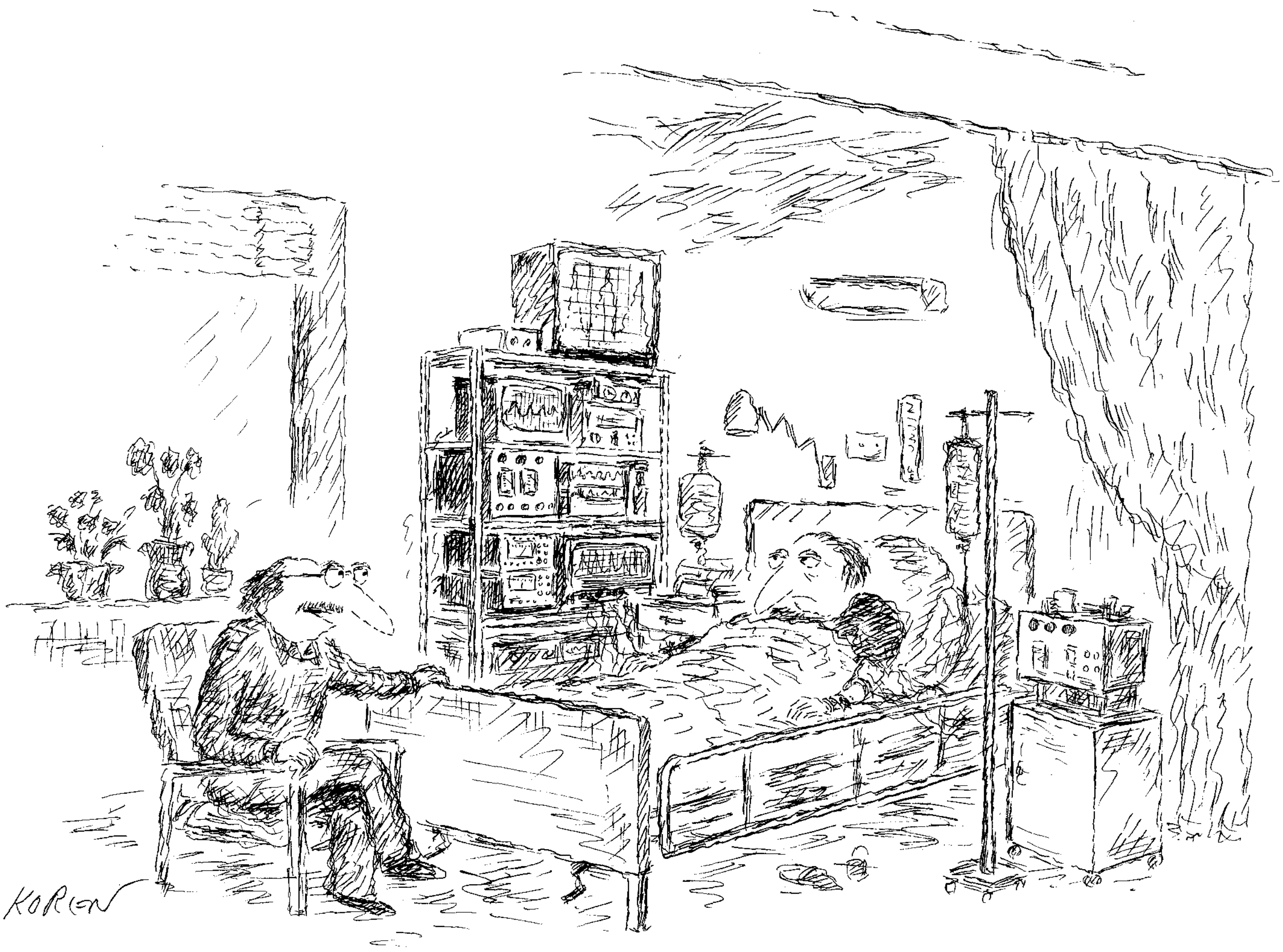
"I'm going to *give* the garter to you," Monroe said. "If she's wearing one. Some tender lovelies will be there."

"I might bring a date," Thompson said.

"If you can find one, right? That would be taking baloney to a banquet, believe me."

"What about the rehearsal?"

"No need. It's just me, you, and



"Milt, I'm beginning to think that your illness is a disharmony of life energy."

• •

Carol and her buddy. And the preacher, of course."

"Monroe, why didn't you tell me before that you were in love?"

"The same reason you didn't say you were miserable."

Janine, their waitress that morning, brought the check to the table.

"You want to go with me to a wedding?" Thompson asked her.

"I'm too young," she said.

Thursday, they got the bank ready for the vice-president's visit—spreading pine straw around the azaleas, edging up along the walkways, mowing one more time for good measure. Friday, they worked the town houses in the planned community. They were early enough to watch children going to school and husbands leaving for work. Around nine, the Donahue wives were on the streets—walking the younger children to the day-care center, and driving new cars to the shopping malls or the tennis courts. The very idea of their leisure made Thompson feel responsible for Monroe. He'd have to win more bids, enlarge his business, to make sure that Monroe earned enough to supplement his wife's income. And what if she became pregnant? He wanted to tell Monroe that getting married was stupid.

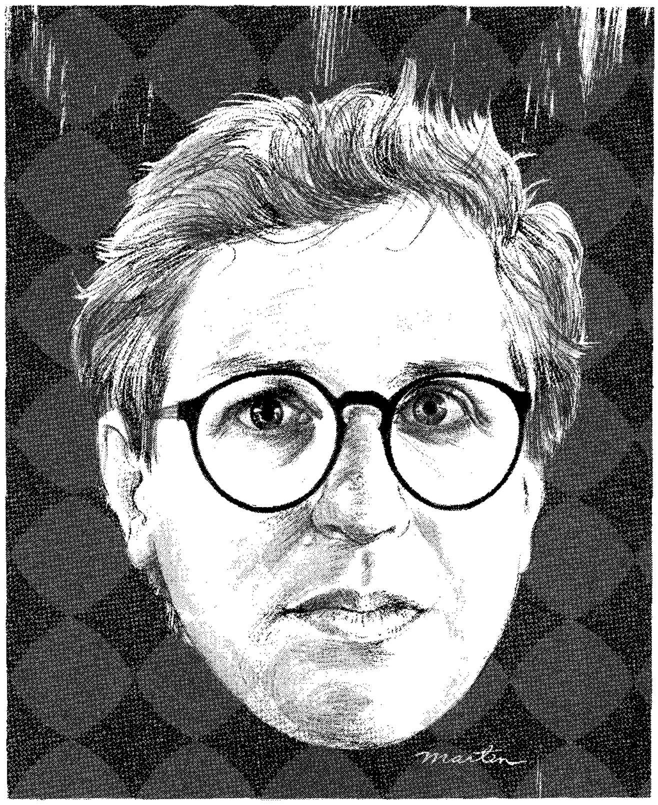
But he didn't. He filled his push mower with gas while Monroe pulled the season's last weeds from the shrubbery patch just inside the gate to the complex. He thought about the saleslady at the rent-to-own store, imagining how her life differed from that of a Donahue woman. Her family probably owned the store and considered blacks to be people who would steal their VCRs. But certainly she worked. He was fairly sure he could get her to go to the wedding with him; their encounter had crossed over the line between customer and salesperson.

He started the mower and guided it along the square of grass in front of the model town house. It was his newest mower—self-propelled—and steering it felt good and almost effortless. He was beginning to think about the wedding. He imagined his date as the only white person there, feeling out of place, scared she'd do something to offend somebody. Maybe she couldn't quite stifle a laugh when the ceremony turned out to be onstage. Or maybe she'd gasp when the bride entered wearing red. Maybe she'd wisecrack to the wrong person about the cake being shaped like a piano, or a peacock, or a truck. And Thompson would stand next to her—that incredibly white woman wearing pink wool—and not mind the crowd's attention at all. He would slip his hand around her waist and feel her stiffen slightly—sense her being eager to leave. And he would be amused, because this was Monroe's wedding, and this anxious, discomforted woman was not his wife.

—JOHN HOLMAN

PROFILES

PREDILECTIONS



AMONG the nonfiction movies that Errol Morris has at one time or another been eager to make but has temporarily abandoned for lack of investor enthusiasm are "Ablaze!" (or "Fire from Heaven"), an examination of the phenomenon of spontaneous human combustion; "Whatever Happened to Einstein's Brain?" (portions of the cerebellum and the cerebral cortex are thought to be in the possession of a doctor in North Carolina, other parts are floating around here and there); "Road," the story of one man's attempt to build across northern Minnesota an interstate highway that no one else wanted; "Insanity Inside Out," based on the book of the same title, by Kenneth Donaldson, a man who, in his forties, was wrongly committed by his parents to a mental hospital and got stuck there for fifteen years; "Weirdo," about the breeding of a giant chicken; "The Wizard of Wendover," about Robert K. Golka and his laser-induced fireball experiments in Utah; and a perusal of Yap, a South Pacific island where stone money is the traditional currency.

Some months ago, Morris attended a meeting with executives of Home Box Office, his primary motive being, as they say in the movie business, to pitch an idea—in that case, the one involving Einstein's brain. The meeting did not go particularly well. An HBO person at one point said admonishingly, "You know, your movies are ironic. Our viewers just don't like irony."

Groping for a more tactful evasion, another HBO person said, "We're already doing a transplant movie."

"But wait a second," Morris replied. "This brain hasn't *been* transplanted —*yet*."

Unapologetically, Morris draws his films fresh from the substance of the real world, where irony has a way of running riot. Describing his work, he goes to some lengths to avoid using the term "documentary" ("the 'D' word," he will say, in a pinch), but he has not yet coined an alternative label that a Hollywood publicist might use to characterize a generic Errol Morris movie. During the past twelve years, he has directed and released three films: "Gates of Heaven," about two pet cemeteries in Northern California; "Vernon, Florida," a series of interviews with several residents of a swamp town in Florida; and "The Thin Blue Line," which arrived in theatres around the country last summer and fall, and which Morris has described, not immodestly, as "the first murder mystery that actually solves a murder." An Errol Morris movie features real people talking uninterrupted, mainly about literal objects or events, only occasionally about feelings or ideas: trafficking in entertaining truths as well as in equally entertaining transparent prevarications; free-associating, it often seems, as if the camera were a psychotherapist whose expensive time it would be a pity to squander on silence.

Near the midpoint of "Gates of Heaven," which was completed in 1978, a woman with a pinched mouth whose age might be anywhere from seventy to eighty-five sits in a chair before an open doorway. She is never identified, but, it happens, her name is Florence Rasmussen. In a manner that alternates between passive and bold, accented by facial expressions that range from beatific to sinister, Florence Rasmussen soliloquizes elegiacally:

"I'm raised on a farm, we had chickens and pigs and cows and sheep and everything. But down here I've been lost. Now they've taken them all away from here up to that— What's the name of that place? Up above here a little ways? That town? Commences with a 'B.' Blue. It's— Blue Hill Cemetery, I think the name of it is. Not too far, I guess, about maybe twenty miles from here. A little town there, a little place. You know where it's at. But I was really surprised when I heard they were getting rid of the cemetery over here. Gonna put in buildings or something over there. Ah well, I know people been very good to me, you know. Well, they see my condition, I guess, must of felt sorry for me. But it's real, my condition is. It's not put on. That's for sure! Boy, if I could only walk. If I could only get out. Drive my car. I'd get *another* car. Ya . . . and my son, if he was only better to me. After I bought him that car. He's got a nice car. I bought it myself just a short time ago. I don't know. These kids—the more you do for them . . . He's my grandson, but I raised him from two years old. . . . I don't see him very often. And he just got the car. I didn't pay for all of it. I gave him four hundred dollars. Pretty good! His boss knows it. Well, he's not working for that outfit now. He's changed. He's gone back on his old job—hauling sand. *No*, not hauling sand; he's working in the office. That's right. He took over the office job. His boss told me that on the phone. But, you know, he should help me more. He's all I got. He's the one who brought me up here. And then put me here by myself among strangers. It's terrible, you stop and think of it. I've been without so much, when I first come up here. Ya. It's what half of my trouble is from—him not being home with me. Didn't cost him nothing to stay here. Every time he need money, he'd always come, 'Mom, can I have this? Can I have that?' But he never pays back. Too good, too easy—that's what everybody tells me. I quit now. I quit. Now he's got the office job, I'm going after him. I'm going after him good, too—if I have to go in . . . in a different way. He's going to pay that money. He's got the office job now. And he makes good money anyway. And he has no kids. He has not married. Never get married, he says. He was married once—they're divorced. Well, she tried to take him for the kid, but she didn't. They went to court. It was somebody else's kid. She was nothing but a tramp in the first place. I told him that. He wouldn't listen to me. I says, 'I know what she is.' I said, 'Richard, please, listen to me.' He wouldn't listen. He knew all, he knew everything. Big shot! But he soon found out. Now that's all over with. I've been through so much I don't know how I'm staying alive. Really, for my age . . . If you're young, it's different. But I've always said I'm never going to grow old. I've always had that, and the people that I tell how old I am, they don't believe me, because people my age as a rule don't get around like I do."

With an arresting instinct for symmetry, Florence Rasmussen manages to contradict most of what she has to say. It seems that she knows certain things, but then, in the next moment, she trots out contrary information: I have roots with the earth; I'm lost in this world. People have been very good to me; I'm all alone, surrounded by strangers, my own flesh and blood treats me badly. I have a health problem that's real; I protest too much. I'd like to drive my car; but I might not even have a car any longer, might have to buy a new one. I bought my son—O.K., he's not my son, he's my grandson—a new car; well, I didn't pay for the whole thing, I gave him four hundred dollars, but anyway I want my money back. His boss— Hold on, he has a different boss. He hauls sand for a living; nope, he's got that office job now. He's not the marrying kind; he was married once. He has no children; he's been involved in a paternity suit. I'll never grow old; I'm so old people can't believe it. Even though I can't walk, people my age as a rule don't get around like I do.

"Gates of Heaven" gives an account of a pet cemetery that fails and one that succeeds; Mrs. Rasmussen refers to each in only a glancing manner. The first day that Morris set out as a bona-fide film director with an actual film crew was the day the residents of the failed pet cemetery were being exhumed, so that they could be transferred to the other cemetery. The cinematographer Morris had engaged to shoot "Gates of Heaven" he fired that same day—a consequence of serious philosophical differences that culminated in a physical struggle for the camera. ("It's *mine!*" "No, it's *mine!*") Day Two, Morris met Florence Rasmussen, and she became the first person with whom he ever filmed an interview. The footage from that interview didn't make it into the final cut, however, because the replacement camera operator, a woman, felt compelled to engage the interviewee in a dialogue. When Mrs. Rasmussen mused "Well, here today, gone tomorrow. Right?" the camerawoman said "No. Wrong." Morris couldn't decide which made him angrier—that the camerawoman had interfered with the interview or that her notions about death and the hereafter were so misguided. In any event, he fired her on the spot and hired a replacement, who lasted three or four days.

One of Morris's techniques is to situate his interview subject in a chair (when possible, a specific chair: a lightweight canvas-and-metal-frame low-back Regista) that is a precise distance (forty-nine inches) from the camera, which is equipped with a 25-mm. Zeiss high-speed prime lens—a lens of fixed focal length, which is one that cannot zoom—and is secured to a tripod, so that the camera cannot pan. When Morris went back to reshoot Mrs. Rasmussen—accompanied by Ned Burgess, his fourth, and final, cinematographer—she rewarded him with what has become the emblem of the Morris style: a seamless monologue from someone who has been allowed to talk until the truth naturally sorts itself out. Quotidian lies, the little fabrications that make the commerce of daily life possible, if not always palatable, are laid on the surface by the speaker. A muted strain of implicit skepticism—the silent voice of the filmmaker—bubbles along just beneath that. Peripheral stuff turns out to matter. "I like the idea of making films about ostensibly absolutely nothing," Morris says. "I like the irrelevant, the tangential, the sidebar excursion to nowhere that suddenly becomes revelatory. That's what all my movies are about. That and the idea that we're in possession of certainty, truth, infallible knowledge, when actually we're just a bunch of apes running around. My films are about people who think they're connected to something, although they're really not."

"Gates of Heaven" is the only one of Morris's films that can be said to have emerged with its original subject matter intact. "The Thin Blue Line," which at its inception was to have been a study of Dr. James Grigson, a Texas psychiatrist who regularly testifies for the prosecution in death-penalty cases, instead became a horrifyingly satiric examination of the wrongful murder conviction and near-execution of an innocent man. "Vernon, Florida," which is essentially plotless—a pastiche of interviews with a turkey hunter, a policeman, a retired couple who are convinced that a glass jar in their possession contains radioactive sand that grows, a wild-animal collector, a Holy Roller preacher, a worm farmer, and others—evolved haphazardly, almost desperately, from an unwieldy idea Morris had of making a fiction film based upon a bizarre insurance scam. A loquacious man named Albert Bitterling, who appears intermittently throughout "Vernon, Flor-

Saðra Segal

Dana Fradon

"Achilles! How's the wife? The kids? The heel?"

• •

ida," has held a pair of opera glasses against the lens of a camera and photographed the night sky. In one scene, displaying the opaque result, he says, "Of course, as you can see is that picture ain't too good, it's a cheap camera, you get a cheap picture." Then, speaking literally and in metaphor, he encapsulates the filmmaker's dilemma: "Well, of course, you see, when you have a camera . . . You have a camera and you point it at a certain— Just like if you had a gun. You don't shoot, do you? Well, if you had a gun and you pointed it at something, you're liable to hit what you're pointing at, and then again you might not."

"Vernon, Florida" has been, as a practical matter, the least accessible of Morris's films; it was completed in 1981, but a commercial videocassette version of it has just been released. Videocassettes of "Gates of Heaven" became available only a few months ago. "The Thin Blue Line" is the first of Morris's films to be widely distributed in theatres. A word that regularly comes up when Morris discusses the until quite recent low-orbit trajectory of his career is "disturbing." The frustration of making movies that only modest numbers of people have seen, or even heard of, has encouraged Morris to cultivate a melodramatic haplessness. In a less ironically disposed person, this tendency might be taken for neurotic self-indulgence. When Morris consents to be the interviewee—when it becomes his turn to sort the truth out—he ends up quoting Shakespeare ("But since the affairs of men rest still uncertain, let's reason with the worst that may befall") or himself ("The fact that the world is, like, utterly insane makes it tolerable"). Once, when I made the mistake of asking, in an offhand manner, how he'd been feeling lately, he said, "I've been horribly depressed, which, as you know, can be terribly time-consuming. I mean, if you're going to do it right, that is." Another time, en route to a preview screening of "The Thin Blue Line," he said, "I hope this won't be terribly embarrassing." A pause, then: "No, actually, I remember, when I was a teen-ager, thinking there was no point in going on, but then I realized that life is just an endless series of embarrassments and I'd hate to miss out on all that."

THE first time I met Morris was in an airport, on a day in early 1987, when he was still working on "The Thin Blue Line" and was flying to Dallas to attend a federal-court hearing. He wore a navy pin-striped suit, carried a briefcase, and could easily have masqueraded as a typical travelling litigator except that he was not flying first class. Days when he doesn't wear a suit, he dresses like a permanent graduate student—khakis, Black Watch blazer or tweed jacket, button-down shirt, dark-framed Clark Kentish eyeglasses. He has short dark-brown hair, which often looks as if it had been slept on the wrong way, and a rueful, asymmetrical smile. Although he is six-one, imperfect posture renders his presence less than imposing. Photographs make him appear either darkly handsome or dolefully goofy. Morris is now forty-one years old. He grew up in Hewlett, on the South Shore of Long Island. His father, a doctor, died when he was two, and his mother, a Juilliard graduate, who did not remarry for more than twenty years, supported him and an older brother by teaching music in a public school. Errol studied cello, read with a passion the forty-odd "Oz" books, watched a lot of television, and on a regular basis went with a doting but not quite right maiden aunt ("I guess you'd have to say that Aunt Roz was somewhat demented") to Saturday matinées, where he saw stuff like "This Island Earth" and "Creature from the Black Lagoon"—horror movies that, viewed again thirty years later, still seem scary to him. "I don't really understand how Errol got drawn to these gothic themes that interest him—maybe that he lost his father," his mother, Cinnabelle Esterman, told me not long ago. "I remember the first time we went on a trip out West. We had to take a flight to Chicago, and a friend drove us to the airport. And I noticed that along the way, in the car, Errol was reading the *World Almanac*, studying about air crashes." In the tenth grade, he was enrolled in the Putney School, in Vermont. Part of what had drawn him to Putney was its highly regarded music program. Morris's most vivid memories, however, include having a forbidden radio confiscated because one evening he made

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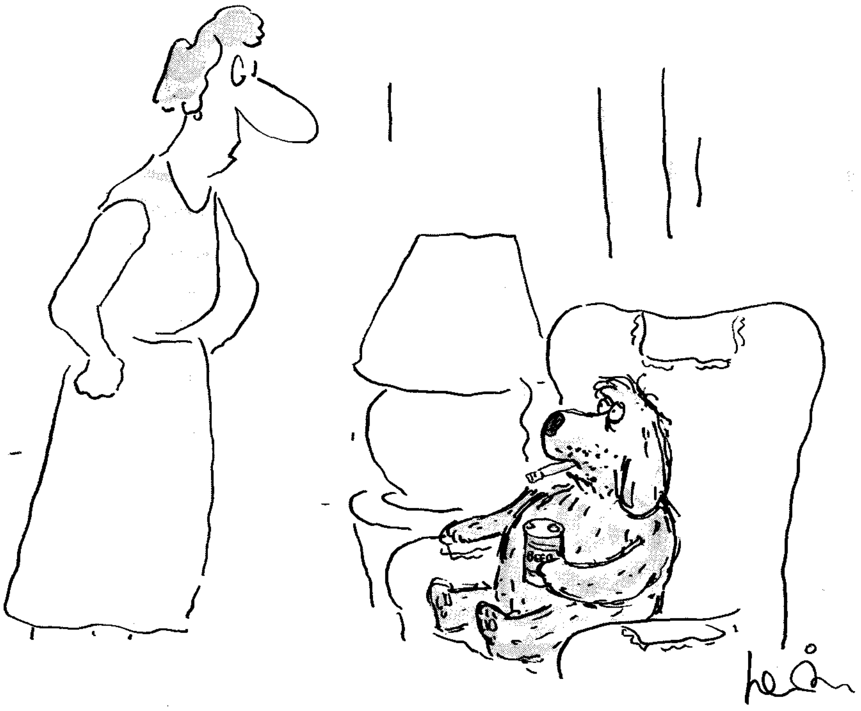
the mistake of loudly singing along while listening to Birgit Nilsson perform the immolation scene from "Götterdämmerung." On another occasion, for an offense that he cannot recall, a dormitory proctor deprived him of his cello.

Next came the University of Wisconsin, where he excelled academically ("the first time I did really well at anything, except elementary school") and, in 1969, received a degree in history. For a couple of years, he drifted about, earning money as a cable-television salesman in Wisconsin and as a term-paper writer in Massachusetts and "trying to get accepted at different graduate schools just by showing up on their doorstep." This strategy, which did not succeed at Oxford and Harvard, finally worked at Princeton, but graduate school soon proved to have been not such a hot idea. Morris's mistake was in pursuing academic disciplines—at Princeton, the history of science—in which he had "absolutely no background."

"I did enter Princeton actually thinking I was going to get a doctorate," he says. "I was wrong. I had big fights with my adviser. I was supposed to be concentrating on the history of physics. And, naturally, my adviser expected me to take all these courses in physics. But the classes were always full of fourteen-year-old Chinese prodigies, with their hands in the air—'Call on me! Call on me!' I couldn't do it. I reneged on some of my commitments. At the end, my adviser actually assaulted me. He was on sabbatical and had an office at the Institute for Advanced Study. I remember thinking, This is the Institute for Advanced Study, and he's *assaulting* me. I'd written a thirty-page double-spaced paper, and he produced thirty single-spaced pages of his own criticizing it. The bile just flowed out of him. I accused him of not even finishing reading what I'd written. It turns out I *was* a problem, but at least I wasn't a drudge, and that school was filled with drudges. I remember saying to my adviser, 'You won't even look through my telescope.' And his response was 'Errol, it's not a telescope, it's a kaleidoscope.' "

In 1972, Morris moved to Berkeley, where he had been accepted as a Ph.D. candidate in philosophy at the University of California. His recollections of that experience also lack a warm glow, but something fundamentally positive did take place, which was that he discovered the Pacific Film Archive, a cinemathèque/library/revival house/symposium center, and the only place in the Bay Area with the ability to devote several days to a retrospective of, say, the cinema of Senegal. Tom Luddy, a film producer, who was then the director of the Archive, recently said, "There were a bunch of regulars and a bunch of eccentric regulars, and Errol was one of the eccentrics. I often had to defend him to my staff. What made him eccentric? Well, for one thing, he dressed strangely. Remember, this is Berkeley in the early seventies. And Errol was wearing dark suits with pants that were too short, white dress shirts, and heavy shoes. He looked like a New York person gone to seed. Then, I let him use our library for research, and he was always getting into little frictions with the staff. He felt he could both use the Archive and put it down. He would leave messes. He never bothered to reshelve books. I found myself defending him, which was often difficult, because he would attack me for the programming. He was a film-noir nut. He claimed we weren't showing the *real* film noir. So I challenged him to write the program notes. Then, there was his habit of sneaking into the films and denying that he was sneaking in. I told him if he was sneaking in he should at least admit he was doing it."



"Bad dog!"

• •

The Archive opened each afternoon at five-thirty. Among the other eccentric regulars were a superannuated Berkeley professor who had a habit of showing up at 5:30 A.M.; the narcoleptic who used to come for the first show, immediately fall asleep, and remain that way through the final feature; a disconcertingly loud laugher, known as the Cackler; and a misanthropic woman who, with her dog, lived in a van outside the Archive.

Meanwhile, Morris's academic career failed to thrive. "Berkeley was just a world of pedants," he says. "It was truly shocking. I spent two or three years in the philosophy program. I have very bad feelings about it." His own flaw, he believes, was that he was "an odd combination of the academic and the prurient." While he was supposed to be concentrating on the philosophy of science, his attention became diverted by an extracurricular interest in the insanity plea. A quotation from "The Black Cat"—a story in which Edgar Allan Poe writes of "the spirit of perverseness . . . this unfathomable longing of the soul *to vex itself* . . . to do wrong for the wrong's sake only"—had become resonant for him, and he began to ponder the metaphysics of mass murder. In 1975, he returned to

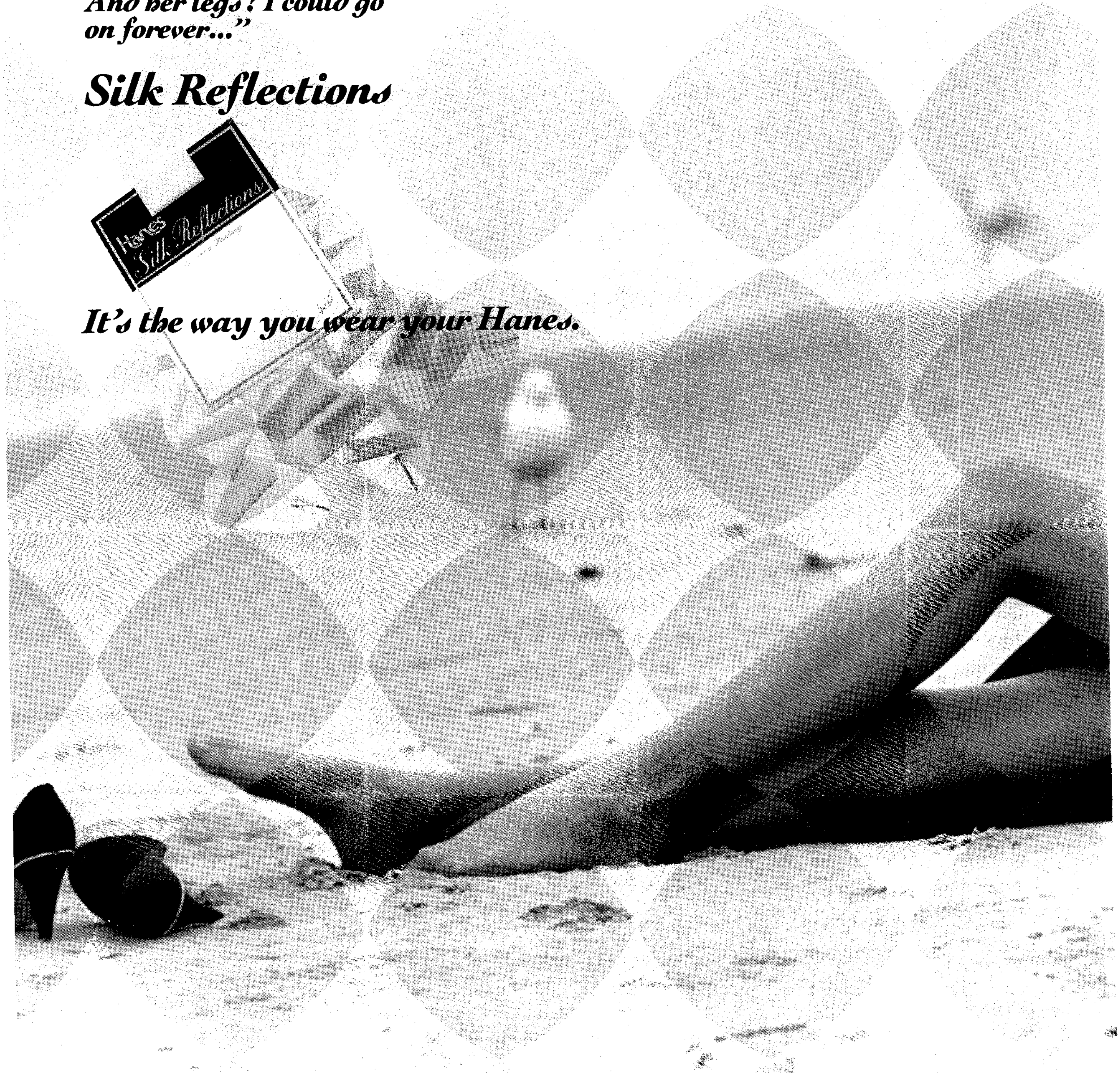
Reflections on Claire.

"She loves the beach ... in winter.

Names her dogs after ex-boyfriends.

And her legs? I could go on forever..."

Silk Reflections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Wisconsin long enough to have several interviews with Ed Gein, the real-life prototype for the Norman Bates character in "Psycho" and a Midwestern legend. "You couldn't spend long in Wisconsin, especially with my predilection, without hearing a lot about Ed Gein," Morris says. Gein was then confined to Central State Hospital, in Waupun, a maximum-security institution for the criminally insane. Evidently, Morris was the first person in quite a while to make a special effort to talk with him. What perhaps discouraged other potential visitors was that Gein not only murdered people but also was a cannibal, a grave robber, and an amateur taxidermist. Morris found his way to Dr. George Arndt, a Geinologist and the author of a study—a catalogue of Ed Gein jokes, basically—titled "Community Reaction to a Horrifying Event."

"I go and meet Dr. Arndt," Morris says. "Almost from the beginning, I entertain serious doubts about the wholesomeness of Dr. Arndt's interest in the Gein case. Dr. Arndt seems real excited that there's this kindred spirit interested in the Ed Gein story. I tell him I've been spending a lot of time in Plainfield, Wisconsin, where Ed Gein lived and committed his crimes. I tell him I've been to the Plainfield cemetery to look at graves. I had the names of the graves whose occupants Ed had exhumed. I noticed that those graves made a circle around his mother's grave. Dr. Arndt looks at me and says, 'You know what that means, don't you?' I say, 'No, sir.' He says, 'It's a kind of sublimation. Transference. He couldn't go down directly after his mother. He had to go down through the other graves.' He says, 'There may be underground tunnels leading to his mother's grave.' So we go in his Cadillac to the Plainfield cemetery. When we're almost there, he pulls over and starts looking around in the brush for something, and he comes up with a big thick stick. We get to the cemetery, we find the graves where the exhumations took place, and he has me put my ear to the ground near Mrs. Gein's grave. While I do that, Dr. Arndt walks around beating the ground, searching for hollow sounds. I hear nothing. Finally, I ask, 'Dr. Arndt, why didn't he just dig straight into Mrs. Gein's grave?' And Dr. Arndt gives me this look and says, '*Too devious.*' "

During his research, Morris stumbled across the provocative fact that Plainfield, with a population of seven hundred, had within a ten-year period been home to several multiple killers, and that Gein's depredations had antedated the others', almost as if he had driven the town mad.

"One of the things that have always fascinated me about abnormal behavior is that we can't really explain it to our satisfaction," Morris says. "Almost everything I do now in my work is about epistemic concerns: how do we come by certain kinds of knowledge? Take the insanity plea—we talk about insane acts and insane people. When we talk about insane acts, we're saying we don't understand something about the act itself. When we say someone is insane, we're either saying, one, 'That person could be mentally ill,' or, two, 'I don't *know* why that person does what he does.' Rather than expressing a knowledge, we're expressing a *lack* of knowledge. I wrote an essay on the insanity plea and movie monsters and certain mechanistic fantasies we have about criminal behavior. I very much wanted to write a doctoral thesis on this stuff, and it hurt my feelings when Berkeley just sort of kicked my ass out of there."

The demise of Morris's academic career was a protracted matter, and he stayed at the university long enough to get a master's degree in philosophy. All the while, he was a devotee of the Pacific Film Archive. Tom Luddy introduced him to Werner Herzog, the German director, whose fascination with fanatics, losers, Nazi supermen, and dwarfs dovetailed with Morris's outside-the-mainstream preoccupations. Once, making the film "Even Dwarfs Started Small," Herzog inadvertently set a dwarf afire; the dwarf survived, and Herzog did penance by throwing himself onto a cactus. At the time he and Morris met, Morris's reading diet included, in addition to his academic texts, the *National Enquirer* and *Weekly World News*. For listeners whom he deemed worthy, he had assembled an endlessly digressive repertoire that included eyewitness tales of Geinology and other vignettes of American dementia.

"Werner was very taken with Errol," Luddy recalls, adding that, despite Morris's never having shot a single foot of film, "Werner treated him as an equal."

Morris and Herzog discussed the question that Morris and Dr. Arndt had left unanswered—whether or not Gein had disinterred his mother—and they set a date for a rendezvous in Plainfield in the summer of 1975. The idea was that, with shovels, in the moonlight, they would satisfy their curiosity. When Herzog arrived in Plainfield, however—he had been working on a film in Alaska and was now driving toward New York—no familiar face was there to greet him. He made a phone call to California and learned that Morris had had second thoughts. A few months later, Morris did return to Plainfield, alone, and rented a room from Ed Gein's next-door neighbors. This time, he stayed almost a year, during which he conducted hundreds of hours of interviews with some of the other homicidally inclined local talent. He had no focussed idea of what to do with the material. Maybe he would make a film about Ed Gein called "Digging Up the Past," or maybe he would write a book. Although he still had a fellowship at the University of California, he didn't have enough money to transcribe all his interview tapes. Some supplementary financial support came from his family, but it was not unqualified support. "My mother was worried about what I was doing," he says. "She has this wonderfully euphemistic way of talking to me. At one point, she said, 'Errol, can't you spend more time with people your own age?' And I said, 'But, Mom, some of these mass murderers *are* my own age.' "

It didn't do Morris any good when, in order to talk to one of the Plainfield murderers, he made his way illegally into a state mental hospital, got caught, and was reported to his academic supervisors at Berkeley. In the fall of 1976, while Morris was still in Plainfield, Herzog unexpectedly returned. During Herzog's visit the previous year, his car had broken down, and he had discovered an automobile-repair shop—a grim place set against a grim, flat natural backdrop—that struck him as an excellent movie location. So now he had come to finish a film, "Stroszek," most of which had been shot in Berlin. He asked Morris to work with him, but Morris felt that he had been abused. "Stealing a *landscape*," he complained. "The worst kind of plagiarism." On the other hand, he had never made a film himself, and here was a chance to observe a master. So he stuck around, and when the shooting was completed Herzog, afflicted with some measure of guilt, handed him an envelope stuffed with cash. They were in a motel room. Morris went to a window and tossed the envelope into a parking lot. After retrieving the money, Herzog offered it once more, saying, "Please don't do that again."

The envelope contained about two thousand dollars—more than enough to finance a two-week trip Morris had been planning. Recently, he had read a newspaper article about an insurance investigator which mentioned, in passing, how several people in an unidentified Southern town had tried to collect benefits after "accidentally" losing limbs. Morris had tracked down the insurance investigator and learned that the town was Vernon (pop. 883), in the Florida panhandle. Vernon's unofficial nickname was now Nub City. In the hierarchy of nubbiedom, the supremely rewarding self-sacrifice was the loss of a right leg and a left arm, because, so the theory went, "afterward, you could still write your name and still have a foot to press the gas pedal of your Cadillac." Morris stayed in Vernon long enough to read some files at the courthouse, talk to an insurance broker and several nubbies, and receive at least one unambiguous death threat. At the Cat's Eye Tavern one night, a citizen twice Morris's size smiled as he extinguished a cigarette on the lapel of Morris's blazer. Morris remembers thinking that perhaps he had packed the wrong clothes. Also, "I remember it hurt my feelings, because it seemed that, you know, maybe the people in Vernon didn't like me." Rarely did murders take place in Vernon, because, someone explained, "down here, people don't get murdered—they just disappear."

Back in Berkeley, Morris tried to write a script for a fiction feature to be called "Nub City." Mainly, he had a pitch line—"Nub City" would be "about people who in order to achieve the American dream literally become a

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fraction of themselves"—but the plot elements were still gestating. Months went by and he made only slight progress. One afternoon while waiting for inspiration to descend, he was eating lunch in the Swallow, a restaurant in the same building as the Pacific Film Archive, and he saw a headline in the San Francisco *Chronicle* that said, "450 DEAD PETS GOING TO NAPA VALLEY." Suddenly, he had an altogether different idea for a film; "Nub City" would have to wait.

IT was enough that in deciding to make "Gates of Heaven" Morris selected a subject that, on its surface, seemed highly likely to repel. He also insisted on making a documentary film "the opposite of how you were supposed to." That meant being static and obtrusive—using artificial light and heavy, earthbound equipment rather than the standard hand-held, mobile tools of cinema verité. After Morris hooked up with Ned Burgess, a compliant cinematographer, the making of "Gates of Heaven" progressed in a straightforward fashion. The film was shot in the spring and summer of 1977 and cost a hundred and twenty thousand dollars to make; the money came from a wealthy graduate-school classmate and from Morris's family.

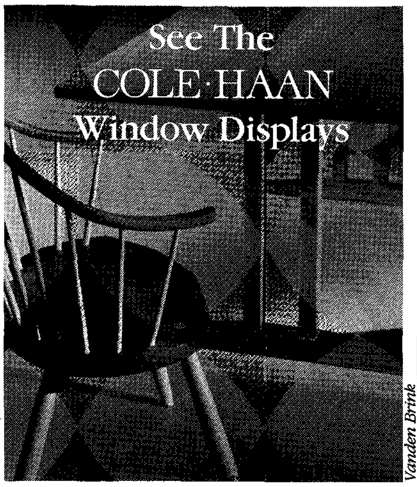
Getting to know mass murderers and their relatives in Wisconsin, Morris had developed an interview technique that, reduced to basics, amounted to: Shut up and let people talk. "Listening to what people were saying wasn't even important," he says. "But it was important to *look* as if you were listening to what people were saying. Actually, listening to what people are saying, to me, interferes with looking as if you were listening to what people are saying."

The first half of "Gates of Heaven" explores the broken dream of a man named Floyd McClure, who lives in Los Altos, a peninsula town thirty miles south of San Francisco. In the opening frames, McClure describes, in a sincere but unmaudlin manner, how the accidental death of a beloved collie in his childhood inspired his vision of a pet cemetery. Choosing a site, he settled on what he calls "the most beautiful piece of land, as far as I was concerned, in the whole valley." (Never mind that the land was situated right next to a freeway; it also happened to be across the street from his house.) "A pet-cemetery business is not a fast-buck scheme, it's not a suède-shoe game," McClure says. "It's a good, solid business enterprise. And in order to have this concept it has to be in your heart, not in your billfold. And these are the type of people I wanted in business with me, in the pet-cemetery *concept*." His co-investors in the by now failed enterprise allow themselves to be interviewed, the owner of a rendering plant talks, families of departed pets have their say, Florence Rasmussen appears. Monologues tend not to parse. At one point, McClure says, "And this is the part of the inspiration of getting our little pets . . . into a cemetery. Something that we could be proud of, of saying, 'My little pet did his chore here—that God has sent him to us to do a chore—love and be loved and serve his master.' And, boy, these little pets that did that . . . Like I said before—death is for the living and not for the dead."

The second half of "Gates of Heaven" focusses on the Harberts family—Cal and his wife, Scottie, and their sons, Dan and Phil—who are the proprietors of Bubbling Well Pet Memorial Park, the *final* final resting place of the displaced tenants of Floyd McClure's doomed pet-cemetery concept. Dan, the younger son, has been employed in the family business for a few years. Phil has recently given up selling insurance in Utah (his idol is W. Clement Stone, the Chicago insurance tycoon and an avatar of the Positive Mental Attitude) and has repatriated to the Napa Valley.

Cal Harberts says, "We created the Garden of Honor. And in this garden we will bury a Seeing Eye dog or a police dog killed in the line of duty at *no* cost—*if* it's killed in the line of duty. And for anybody else who wants to share this garden then we created a price which amounts to more than any other garden that we have."

Phil, who manifests what might or might not be symptoms of an incipient existential crisis—possibly a consequence of having listened to and delivered too many motivational lectures—says, "I have to say to myself: What does it mean to me? What does *this* mean to me? What is it going to mean to me? I recognize this and— A couple of things when I was instructing motivation back in Salt Lake City is that if we don't stop and ask ourselves a question once in a while to probe our sub-



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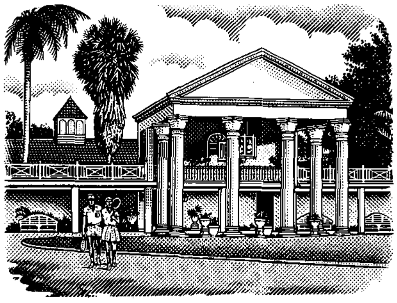

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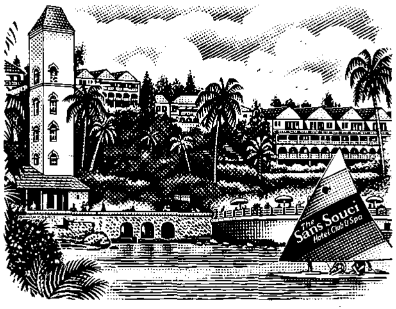

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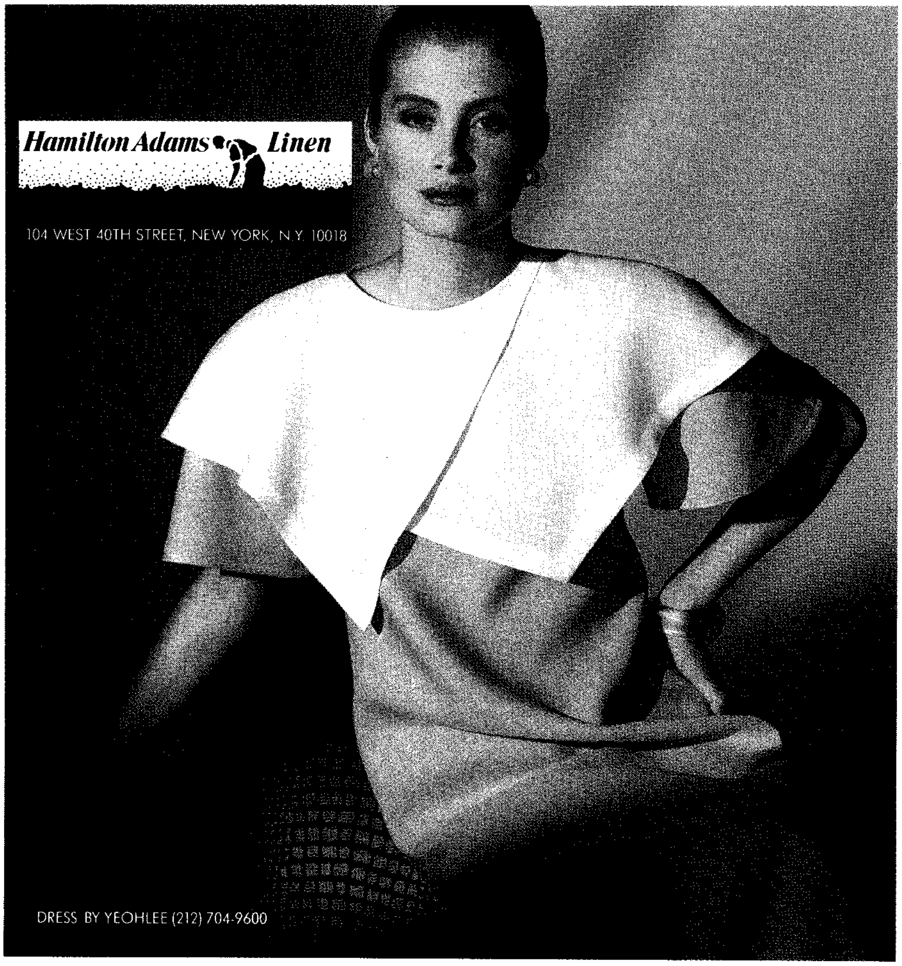
conscious or to probe our conscious . . . I used to teach it. It's a plain, simple formula. We reduced everything to a formula, memorized it, and therefore we were able to repeat it constantly. I used to call it the R2-A2 formula: Recognize, Relate, Assimilate, and put into Action! Like, I could be driving down the freeway and see a 450 SL. I could say, 'Hey, I like that. What does that mean to me? What would I have to do to get it? How can I do it?' And then go to work for it. And strive for it. It kind of makes life easy. I think that's why a lot of people don't—They get frustrated. They have emotional problems, it's that they don't know how to cope with their—*mind*. There are three things that I've got to do and that if anybody wants to do to be successful, to have the desire, the want-to. Why do you go to work in the morning? *Gee, why am I here?* Because you want to. But that's obvious. And then the next very important ingredient is something that a lot of people and a lot of businesses fail to delge into. It's the activity knowledge. It would be the equation to a mathematical problem. It would be equal to the chemist's ability to emulsify chemicals—you know, properly, the valences. But the knowledge of it, the whole scope. Everything in detail. And then the third element would be, of course, the know-how or the experience. I have the inspiration to action. I don't have the activity knowledge, but I'm getting the know-how before I'm getting the activity knowledge. As a matter of fact, I'm getting more know-how than I'm getting activity knowledge. But they can be correlated together. They can be overlapped."

Dan Harberts says, "As far as preparation—a hole has to be dug, prepared. We have to make sure that the hole is going to fit the size of the casket. Because you don't want to make it too large, because you're going to waste space. And you don't want to make it too small, because you can't get the thing in there."

"Gates of Heaven" was first shown during the 1978 New York Film Festival, which happened to coincide with a newspaper strike. In other words, "Gates of Heaven" sprang into a void. When the film opened in Berkeley, that same year, a glowing review by Michael Covino appeared in the *East Bay Express*. (Covino later retooled the essay, and it was published in *Film*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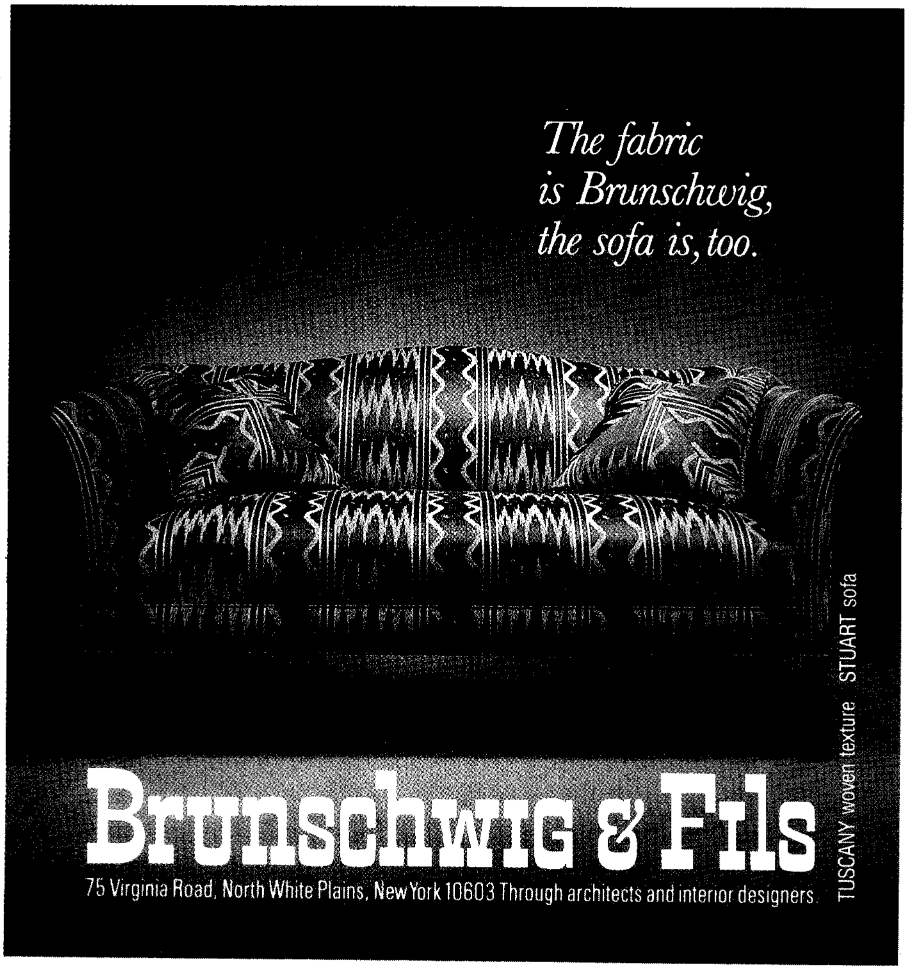
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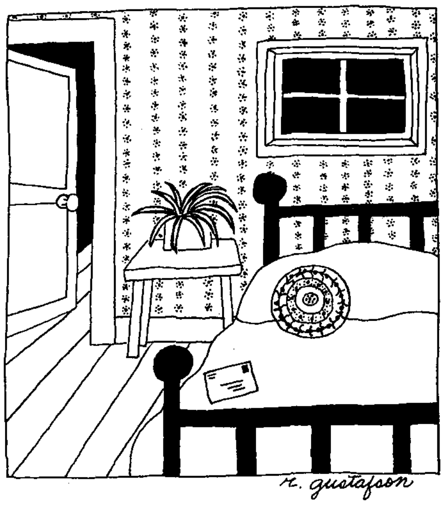
Quarterly.) More than two years elapsed before "Gates of Heaven" was seen again, in New York or anywhere else—before anyone paid significant attention. In the spring of 1981, New Yorker Films arranged a limited national distribution. The notices were favorable—in several instances, extravagantly so. Perhaps the most ardent champion of "Gates of Heaven" across the years has been Roger Ebert, who includes it in his list of the ten best films of all time and calls it "compulsively watchable, a film that has engaged me as no other movie has in my twenty-one years as a movie critic." When Ebert is invited to give a speech and is told that he can screen a film of his choosing, he selects "Gates of Heaven," which he regards as "a film about hope—hope held by the loneliest people who have ever been on film." Ebert estimates that he has seen it at least fifty times—often enough to have memorized long passages. "Every time I show this, it plays differently," he says. "Some people think it's about animals. Some people think it's about life and death. I've shown it to a group of bankers, who believe it raises all kinds of questions about success, about starting a small business. People think it's funny or sad or deadpan or satirical. They think that Errol Morris loved the people in the film, or that he was being very cruel to them. I've never yet had a person tell me that it's a bad film or a film that doesn't interest them."

Werner Herzog commemorated the Berkeley première of "Gates of Heaven" by eating one of his shoes—a poached desert boot—in a public ceremony. Though less spectacular than flinging oneself upon a cactus, this event was sufficiently momentous for the documentary filmmaker Les Blank to record it in a twenty-minute short titled "Werner Herzog Eats His Shoe." A haze of myth enshrouds the genesis of the shoe-eating. Tom Luddy's version has Herzog, while one day arguing with Morris in a hallway of the Pacific Film Archive, saying, "You'll never make a film, but if you do I'll come and eat my shoe at the première." Herzog maintains that it happened in a more encouraging manner, as in "You are going to make a film. And the day I am going to see the film in a theatre I will eat the shoes I am wearing." Morris, who claims not to recall any of the above, says the entire stunt was concocted by Luddy.

"I didn't make 'Gates of Heaven' so that Werner Herzog would have to eat his shoe," he says. "It's not as if I decided to realize my potential as a human being in order to get somebody to ingest something distasteful. I specifically asked Werner *not* to eat his shoe." Morris was supposed to fly from New York to Berkeley to attend the screening and to appear in Les Blank's film. At Kennedy Airport, he boarded a plane, but when a mechanical problem forced all the passengers to get off he decided not to go. "As a result, I don't appear in 'Werner Herzog Eats His Shoe,' " he says. "I suppose I regret that reticence. Why be so prissy? Why try so hard to control things? I'm not even sure what that's all about. Probably, as a result of my petulant behavior, fewer people have seen 'Gates of Heaven' than otherwise would have. In fact, I'm still surprised when anyone tells me he's seen it."

IN the winter of 1979, Morris went back to Vernon, Florida, and for very little money he was able to rent one of the biggest houses in the county. Vernon was no less xenophobic than any other small Southern town. When the locals asked Morris why he had come there and he gave vague, misleading answers, the typical response was "No, you're here because of the Nub City stuff." He spent much of his time attending revival meetings and driving around to places that had interesting names—Blackhead, Lizard Lake, the Ebro Dog Track. Although he was still enamored of the Nub City idea, he had not yet written a workable screenplay. If he were to try to make a nonfiction film about the Nub City episode, "it would turn into one of those bad investigative documentaries where people are slamming doors in your face." Finally, after several months of insisting "I'm not here about Nub City, I'm not making a film about Nub City," guilt overwhelmed him, he indeed became incapable of making a film about Nub City, and he left town.



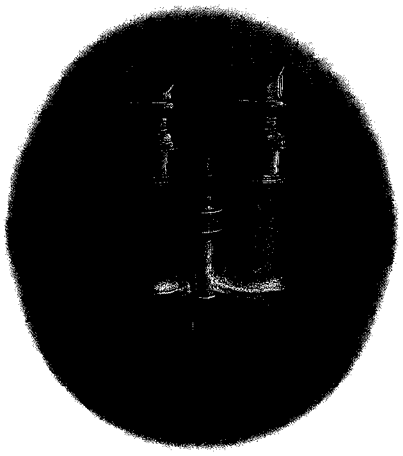
A year later, he returned, rented the same big house, and spun his wheels some more. Now, however, vacillation carried a steeper price tag, because he had financial help from German television and from WNET, the public-television affiliate in New York. A crew of recent graduates from the New York University film school drove to Vernon in a rented van, bringing with them equipment so heavy that the van blew out two sets of tires on the drive south. When they arrived, Morris had still not decided what the film would be about. A controversy had arisen involving the firing and rehiring of one of the local police officers. Morris felt that the officer's travails were connected with "the Napoleonic ambitions of the king of the nubbies." The king of the nubbies had advised Morris to leave town within twenty-four hours or leave in a casket. When Morris failed to oblige, the king made what seemed a sincere effort to run down Ned Burgess, the cinematographer, with a truck. More or less in desperation—to get the king of the nubbies off his back, to give the public-television people something, *anything*, for their money—Morris began to film interviews with various interesting citizens of Vernon, among them Roscoe Collins, the cop; Joe Payne, the collector of wild animals (opossum, gopher, tortoise, rattlesnake); Albert Bitterling, the cosmologist with the opera glasses ("Reality—you mean, *this* is the real world? Ha, ha, ha. I never thought of that"); George Harris and Claude Register, two geezers who discuss how an acquaintance put a shotgun to his forehead and pulled the trigger with his big toe ("And he said, that day, he says, 'That'll be the last thing I ever do is to shoot myself.' Which it was"). "Vernon, Florida" contains not a single reference to Nub City. Rather, as with "Gates of Heaven," the film's subjects are the American vernacular and the malleability of truth. Morris presents Vernon, Florida, as is—no special effects, what you see is what you get—as if he had stumbled across, and

BRITTANY HAIFA LAHAINA WATERFORD BALI NICE SYDNEY TANGIER JUNEAU LENINGRAD NAWILIWILI KUALA LUMPUR

WHITTIER HAMBURG PLAYA DEL CARMEN NAPLES MANILA KETCHIKAN LAS PALMAS OCHO RIOS MELBOURNE PUERTO VALLARTA SHANGHAI CARTAGENA BRISBANE ST. NAZAIRE

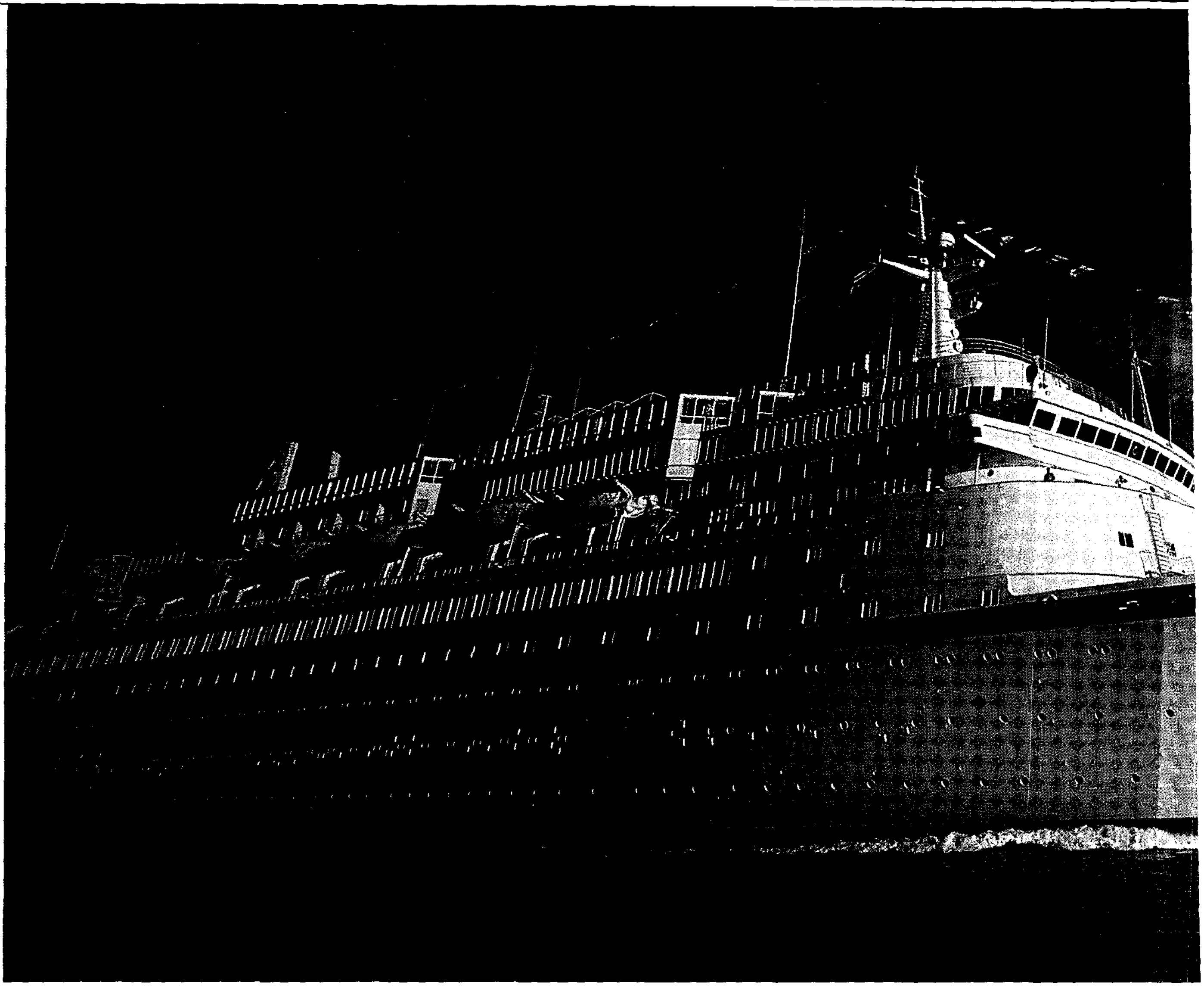
SEOUL CORFU STOCKHOLM AUCKLAND SYDNEY DUBLIN VENICE VILLEFRANCHE HALIFAX SAN FRANCISCO ACAPULCO

COPENHAGEN DUBROVNIK TOKYO GEIRANGER HELSINKI MANAUS HONG KONG BEIJING HONOLULU BERGEN VIGO GDANSK ST. CRUZ MOOREA PALMA DE MALLORCA SYRACUSE



ON EASTER ISLAND, THE UNBLINKING STATUES KNOW OF THIS PLACE. SO DO THE SHOPKEEPERS OF HONG KONG AND THE STARLETS IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE. SOVIET SNAPSHOTS CAN PROVE ITS EXISTENCE. AMAZON CHIEFTAINS TELL OF ITS WONDERS. IT IS EVERY PLACE YOU COULD WANT TO BE, AND THE BEST OF EVERY PLACE.

O PERTH MYKONOS KUALA LUMPUR NEW YORK OSLO PIRAEUS LONDON PAPEETE BORDEAUX NAPLES MANILA KETCHIKAN LAS PALMAS OC



CAM

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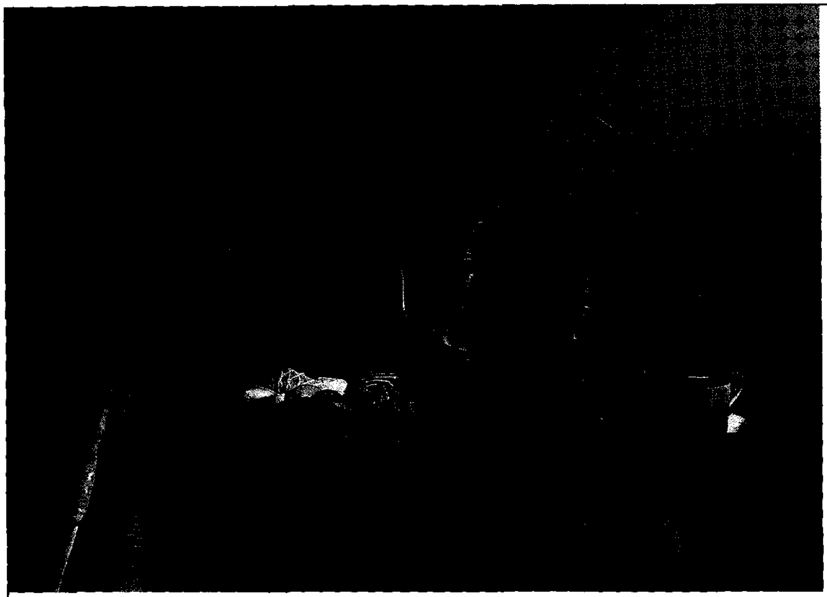
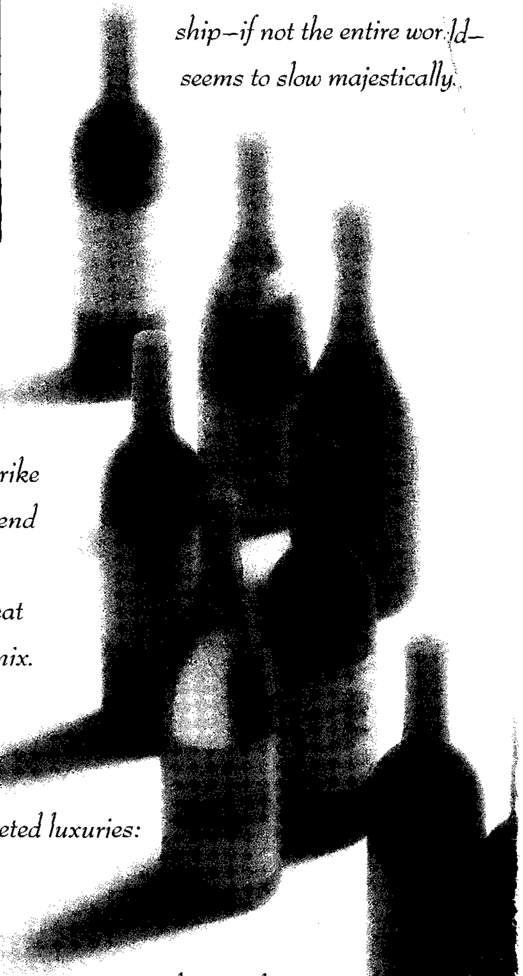
BRITTANY HAIFA LAHAINA WATERFORD BALI NICE SYDNEY TANGIER JUNEAU LENINGRAD NAWILIWILI LISBON VANCOUVER LIVORN

COPENHAGEN DUBROVNIK TOKYO GEIRANGER HELSINKI MANAUS HONG KONG BEIJING HONOLULU BERGEN VIGO GDANSK ST. CRUZ MOOREA PALMA DE MALLORCA SYRACUSE



Every day, without fail, high tea arrives at four o'clock. It is an unusual time on the seas, unforgettable to those who have experienced it. More often than not, a harpist plays, the ocean suddenly becomes glassy, and the ship—if not the entire world—seems to slow majestically.



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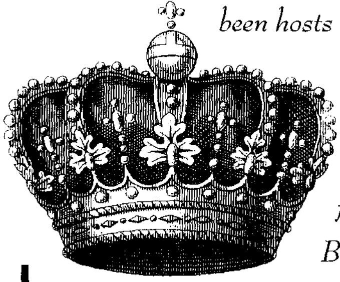

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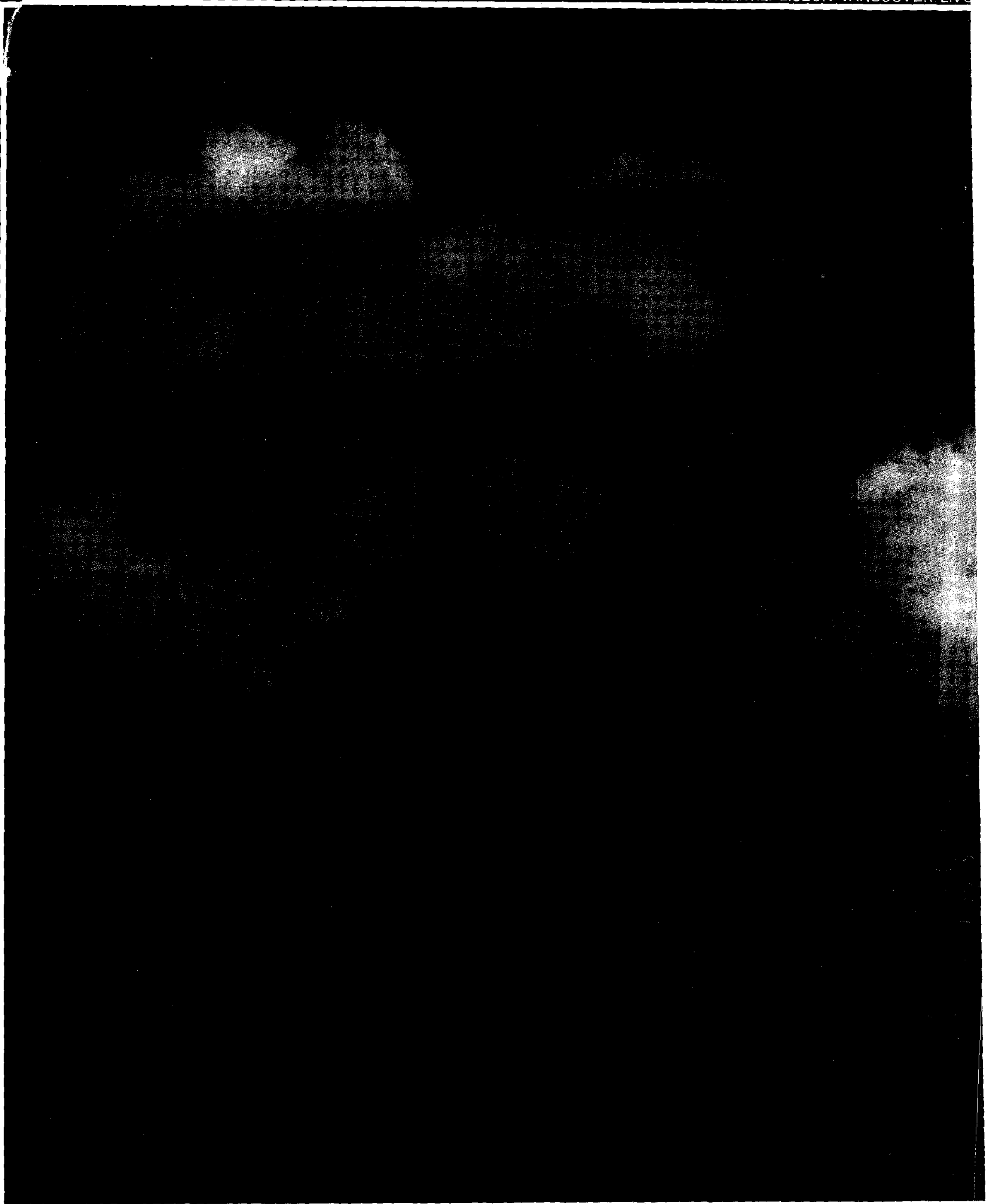
BRITTANY HAIFA LAHAINA WATERFORD BALI NICE SYDNEY TANGIER JUNEAU LENINGRAD NAWILIWILI LISBON VANCOUVER LIVO

COPENHAGEN DUBROVNIK TOKYO GEIRANGER HELSINKI MANAUS HONG KONG BEIJING HONOLULU BERGEN VIGO GDANSK ST. CRUZ MOOREA PALMA DE MALLORCA SYRACUSE



A MILLION TALES IN A HUNDRED TONGUES MIGHT DESCRIBE THIS PLACE.

SEOUL CORFU STOCKHOLM AUCKLAND SYDNEY DUBLIN VENICE VILLEFRANCHE HALIFAX SAN FRANCISCO ACAPULCO BARCELONA

STANBUL MYKONOS KUALALUMPUR NEW YORK OSLO PIRAEUS LONDON PAPEETE BORDEAUX SOCHI BOSTON FT. LAUDERDALE

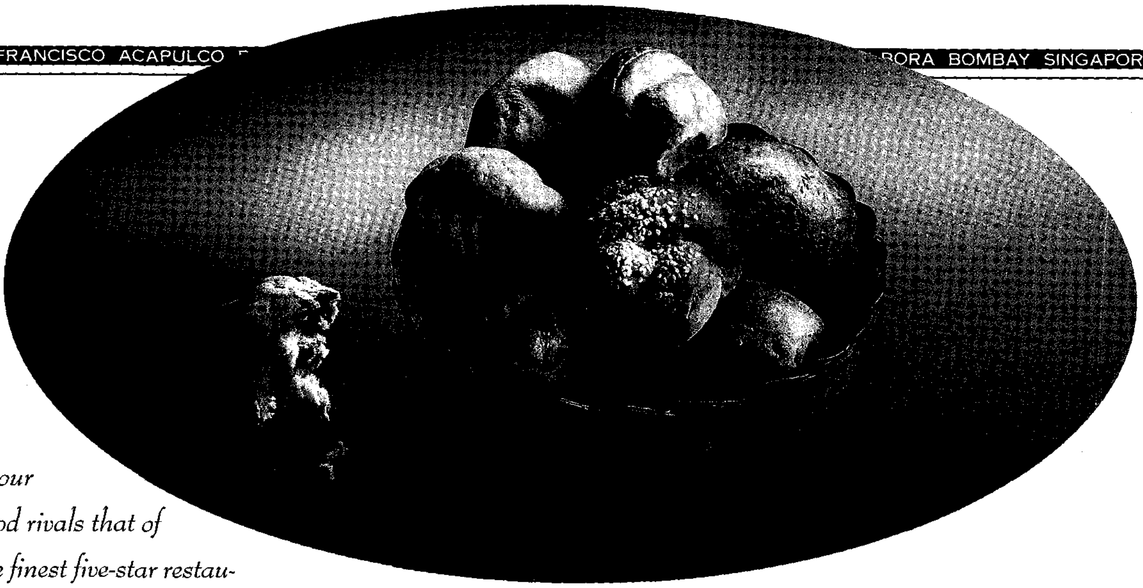
WHITTIER HAMBURG PLAYA DEL CARMEN NAPLES MANILA KETCHIKAN LAS PALMAS OCHO RIOS MELBOURNE PUERTO VALLARTA SHANGHAI CARTAGENA BRISBANE ST. NAZAIRE

BUT IN THE END, IT IS PERHAPS BEST CAPTURED IN A SINGLE WORD:

UALALUMPUR ISTANBUL BANGKOK QUEBEC BORA BORA BOMBAY SINGAPORE LE HAVRE SKAGWAY LEITH MONTREAL ODESSA

AX SAN FRANCISCO ACAPULCO

ORA BOMBAY SINGAPORE DUBLIN



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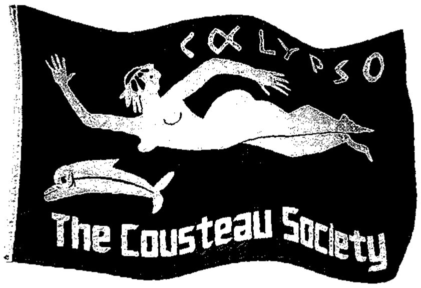

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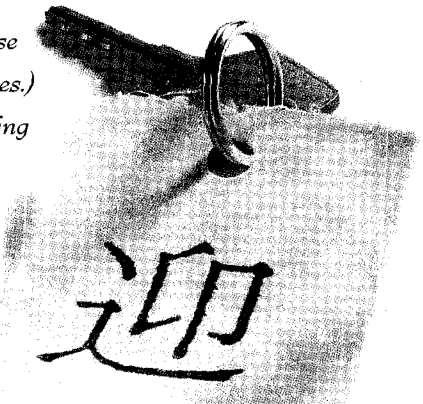

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LIWILI LISBON VANCOUVER LIVORNO PERTH MYKONOS KUALA LUMPUR NEW YORK OSLO PIRAEUS LONDON PAPEETE AMSTERDAM

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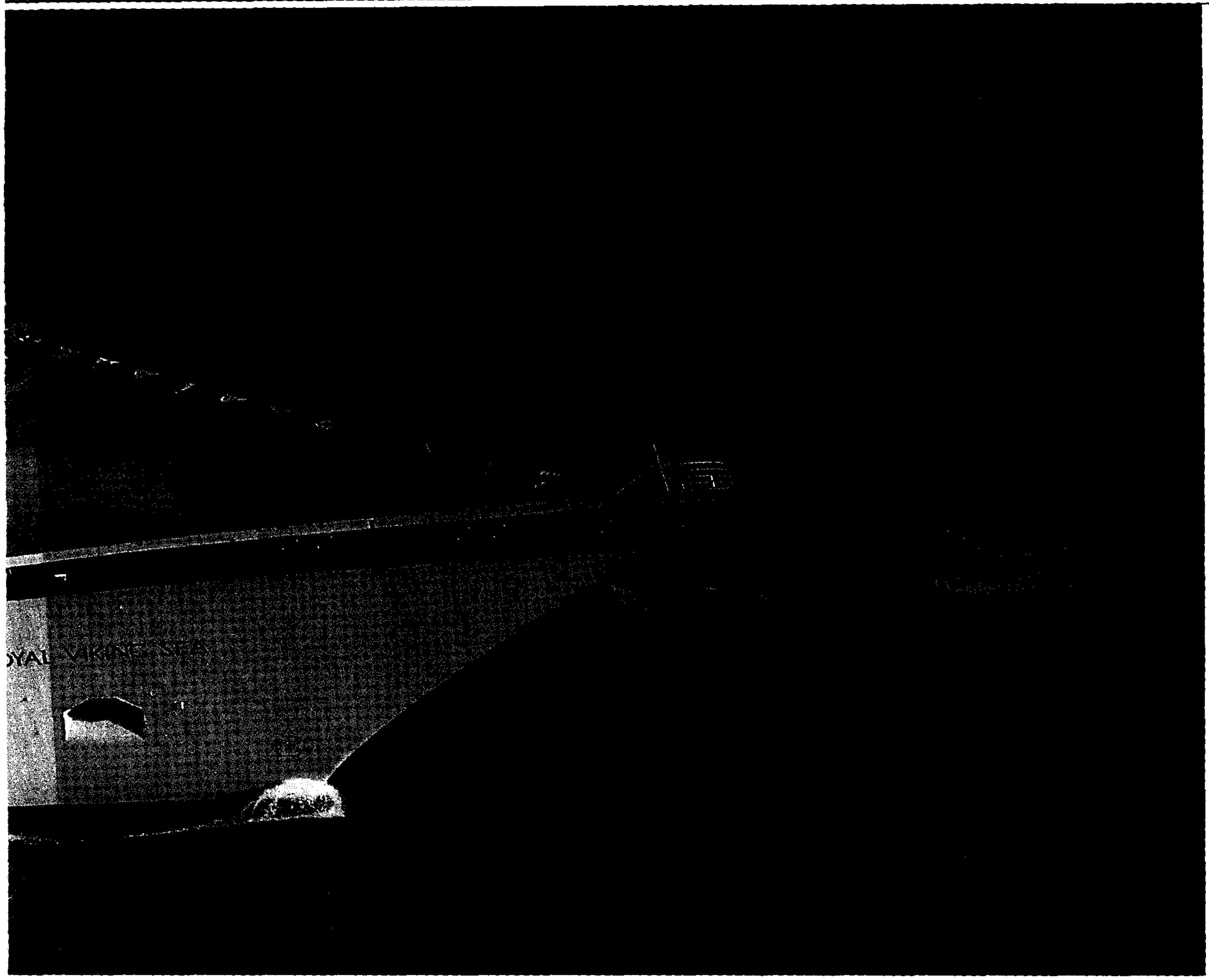

ELOT.

re made up of a series of spectacular oments, fondly held in the mind forever. One never knows what tiny detail, what small task taken care of just so, will one day be the latchkey to such a memory.

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HOBART SYRACUSE WHITTIER HAMBURG PLAYA DEL CARMEN LAHAINA WATERFORD BALI NICE SYDNEY TANGIER JUNEAU LENINGRAD NAW

BRITTANY HAIFA LAHAINA WATERFORD BALI NICE SYDNEY TANGIER JUNEAU LENINGRAD NAWILIWILI KUALA LUMPUR

COPENHAGEN DUBROVNIK TOKYO GEIRANGER HELSINKI MANAUS HONG KONG BEIJING HONOLULU BERGEN VIGO GDANSK ST. CRUZ MOOREA PALMA DE MALLORCA SYRACUSE

WHITTIER HAMBURG PLAYA DEL CARMEN NAPLES MANILA KETCHIKAN LAS PALMAS OCHO RIOS MELBOURNE PUERTO VALLARTA SHANGHAI CARTAGENA BRISBANE ST. NAZAIRE

THE GRAND ADVENTURE, 1989.

WINTER

Amazon
January 19 (12 days)
Manaus > Ft. Lauderdale

Trans-Canal
January 31, March 4
(15 days)
Ft. Lauderdale > California

February 16, March 20
(15 days)
California > Ft. Lauderdale

February 27 (12 days)
Callao > Ft. Lauderdale

Australia/New Zealand
January 30, February 23
(12 days)
Sydney > Auckland

February 11, March 7
(12 days)
Auckland > Sydney

South Seas
January 5 (24 days)
Los Angeles > Sydney

Pacific Orient
March 19 (20 days)
Sydney > Hong Kong

Hawaii-Tahiti
January 29 (16 days)
Los Angeles > Papeete

Easter Island
February 14 (13 days)
Papeete > Callao

World
Jan. 8, 1989 (100 days)
San Fran. > Ft. Laud.

SPRING

Amazon
April 5 (12 days)
Ft. Lauderdale > Manaus

April 17 (12 days)
Manaus > Ft. Lauderdale

China In-Depth
April 8 (14 days)
Hong Kong > Kobe

April 22 (14 days)
Kobe > Hong Kong

China Showcase
May 6, May 28 (14 days)
Hong Kong > Beijing

May 14 (14 days)
Beijing > Hong Kong

Trans-Atlantic
April 18 (15 days),
April 29 (9 days)
Ft. Lauderdale > Lisbon

Mediterranean
May 3 (13 days)
Lisbon > Venice

May 16 (13 days)
Venice > Lisbon

May 8 (12 days)
Lisbon > Istanbul

May 20 (12 days)
Istanbul > Venice

Connoisseur's Europe
May 29 (13 days)
Lisbon > Copenhagen

SUMMER

Alaska
July 4 (11 days)
San Fran. > Vancouver

July 15, July 26, August 6,
August 17 (11 days)
Vancouver > Vancouver

Canada/New England
August 26 (14 days)
New York > New York

China Showcase
June 5 (14 days)
Beijing > Tokyo

Trans-Pacific
June 19 (16 days)
Tokyo > San Francisco

August 28 (12 days)
Vancouver > Tokyo

Scandinavia/Russia
June 11, July 20, July 26
(13 days)
Round Trip Copenhagen

July 1 (13 days)
London > Copenhagen

August 2 (13 days)
Copenhagen > London

Connoisseur's Europe
June 19 (12 days)
Naples > London

August 21 (14 days)
London > Nice

North Cape/Murmansk
June 24 (14 days)
Round Trip Copenhagen

Fjords of Norway
July 8, July 14 (12 days)
Round Trip Copenhagen

British Isles
August 8 (13 days)
Copenhagen > London

Trans-Atlantic
August 15 (11 days)
London > New York

FALL

Canada/New England
Sept. 9, Sept. 23,
October 7 (14 days)
New York > New York

Trans-Canal
October 21 (19 days)
New York > California

Amazon
October 31 (12 days)
Ft. Lauderdale > Manaus

November 12 (12 days)
Manaus > Ft. Lauderdale

Panama Canal/Caribbean
November 24,
December 6, (12 days)
Round Trip Ft. Lauderdale

China
September 10 (14 days)
Tokyo > Hong Kong

October 16 (14 days)
Hong Kong > Kobe

October 30 (14 days)
Kobe > Hong Kong

September 24 (14 days)
Hong Kong > Beijing

October 2 (14 days)
Beijing > Hong Kong

Trade Winds
November 10 (38 days)
California > California

Jewels of the Orient
November 13 (12 days)
Hong Kong > Bangkok

November 25 (12 days)
Bangkok > Hong Kong

Mediterranean
September 4 (12 days)
Nice > Istanbul

September 16 (13 days)
Istanbul > Istanbul

September 29 (13 days)
Istanbul > Rome

October 12 (19 days)
Rome > Ft. Lauderdale

Trans-Canal Holiday
December 18 (17 days)
Ft. Lauderdale > California

December 18 (17 days)
California > Ft. Lauderdale

Pacific Orient Holiday
December 19 (20 days)
Hong Kong > Sydney

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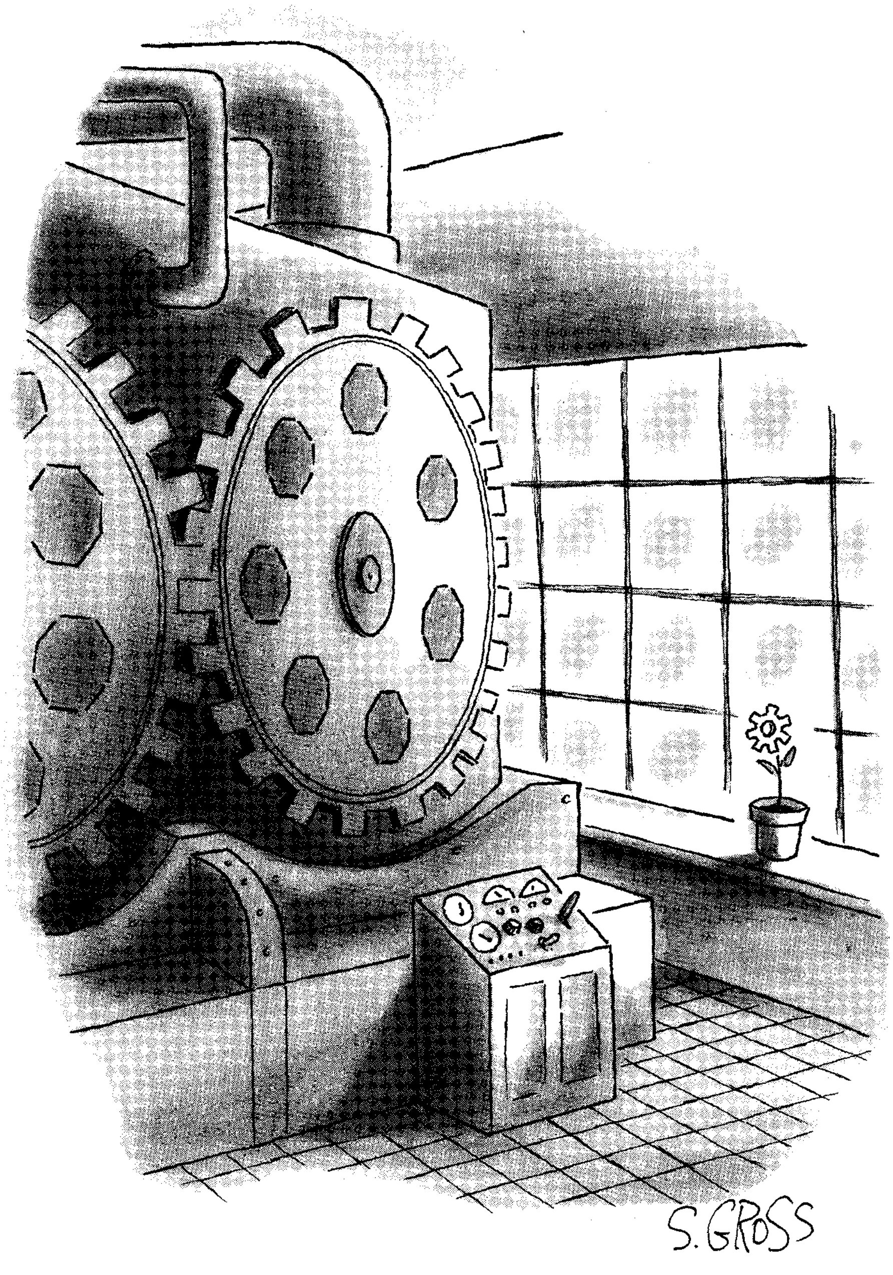
Bahamian Registry

without editorial intrusion had agreed to share, an unexplored settlement full of Florence Rasmussens.

Howard Pettis, the worm farmer, says, “I’ve never studied no book on these wigglers. What I know about ’em is just self-experience. They got books on ’em, but them books is wrong. They don’t teach you right. They don’t teach you right on ’em. Teach you what kind of feed to feed ’em. How to do ’em and all, there. And it’s all wrong, in my book.”

Henry Shipes, the turkey hunter (“I can’t tell you how it feel. It’s just a hell of a sport, that’s all”), sits in a chair in his living room and, with enormous relish, recounts the gut-stirring thrills of each of a series of trophy kills. While the viewer is not prohibited from imputing deep meanings to the images or the monologues of Henry Shipes, one ultimately gets the feeling that if turkey hunting stands as a metaphor for anything it is probably turkey hunting. In the film’s final scene, Henry Shipes, on a hunt, surveys a crowd of buzzards roosting on a cypress tree and counts them aloud—thirty-five. “Listen to that sound,” he says. “That *fwoop fwoop*. Hear that sound? Getting in and out of the trees? That flop-flop sound? Mmm-hmm. That sound’ll sure mistake you for turkeys. Listen! Hear that flop-flop? Limbs breaking. Hear that good flop then? Listening to that gives me the *turkey fever*. Mmm-hmm. I wish there’s as many turkeys as there are buzzards.”



Like “Gates of Heaven,” “Vernon” had its première at the New York Film Festival—the 1981 edition. Werner Herzog called it “an invention of cinema, a discovery of one side of cinema that all of us have not known yet.” A review in *Newsweek* said it was “a film as odd and mysterious as its subjects, and quite unforgettable”—unforgettable, that is, for those who laid eyes on it. Because it had a running time of only sixty minutes, no national distributor materialized, and not until the summer of 1982, when it was shown on public television, did significant numbers of viewers or critics take notice. Meanwhile, Morris was, as usual, low on funds. He was living in Manhattan, occupying rooms in a series of not quite elegant hotels—the Carter, the Bryant, the Edison, the Wellington—before finally settling in a building in the West Fifties, where he still keeps an apartment. The more dire his fiscal circumstances grew, the better he got to know a Mr. Montori, an employee of a collection agency. Mr. Montori seemed to derive pleasure from gracing Morris’s telephone-answering machine with one-a-day rhetorical questions like “Mr. Morris, have you no sense of shame?” and “Mr. Morris, were you really brought up to act this way?” Then the calls abruptly ceased. After several months had passed, Morris phoned the collection agency, asked “Is Mr. Montori O.K.?,” and learned that his tormentor had moved on to a more rewarding position elsewhere.

In earnest, Morris sought backing for what turned out to be some of his most resistible film projects: “Road,” the story of the northern Minnesota interstate-highway folly; Robert K. Golka, the laser-induced-fireball wizard in Utah; Centralia, Pennsylvania, the coal town where an inextinguishable subterranean fire began burning in 1962. Morris concluded that “people who tend to be interested in documentary filmmaking weren’t interested in my films, because they didn’t look like documentary films.” The theme of “Road,” in particular—a man wants to create a complicated and expensive thing for which absolutely no need exists—was, he says, “disturbingly self-reflective.”

As his debts accumulated, his stepfather advised him that the time had

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come to "turn yourself in to the phone company." Instead, Morris permitted himself a brief Hollywood interlude. In 1983, Edward Pressman, a producer whose credits include films by Brian De Palma, Terrence Malick, and Oliver Stone, agreed to finance the development of a screenplay about the exploits of John and Jim Pardue, brothers from Missouri who, fifteen years earlier, had killed their father, their grandmother, and two accomplices and robbed five banks, in two instances using dynamite. Pitching the film, Morris would say, "The great bank-robbery sprees always take place at a time when something is going wrong in the country. Bonnie and Clyde were apolitical, but it's impossible to imagine them without the Depression as a backdrop. The Pardue brothers were apolitical, but it's impossible to imagine them without Vietnam." Pressman underwrote a sojourn at the Chateau Marmont, a Hollywood hotel that is famous in part because John Belushi died there (not because Errol Morris wrote anything memorable while in residence). Morris enlisted Tom Waits and Mickey Rourke to portray the Pardue brothers, and got as far as writing a treatment before the project derailed.

Next, Morris was set to direct a Pressman film called "The King Lives," about an Elvis Presley impersonator; this venture proceeded not very far before Morris was fired. For Dino De Laurentiis, Morris agreed to work on an adaptation of a Stephen King short story. Then De Laurentiis changed his mind and asked him to adapt a different King short story. Then he changed his mind again and gave Morris two and a half weeks to write a screenplay based on King's "Cycle of the Werewolf." Around the time that De Laurentiis rejected the script—because it "wasn't frightening enough"—Morris's brother and only sibling, Noel, died suddenly of a heart attack, at age forty. "I was very depressed," Morris says. His apartment in Manhattan was a couple of blocks from the Ed Sullivan Theatre, from whose studios fund-raising telethons were often broadcast. He found himself dropping in. "My favorite was the Stop Arthritis Telethon," he says. "When I would go to these things, I would always see the same people in the audience, and I'd look upon them with some pity, and then I realized that I was one of them."

In 1984, Morris married Julia Sheehan, an art historian, whom he had met in Wisconsin in the mid-seventies, during his Ed Gein phase. Julia had tried to get a friend to introduce them, but the friend "made such a mess of it I actually approached Errol to apologize," she says. "I wanted to meet him because I'd heard he had been interviewing murderers. I didn't know anyone else who knew any murderers. It was quiet in Wisconsin—the sixties were over, not much was going on—so somebody who had met murderers sounded good." Morris recalls saying to her, early in their relationship, "I was talking to a mass murderer but I was thinking of you," and immediately fearing that this might *not* have sounded affectionate. Julia, however, was flattered: "I thought, really, that was one of the nicest things anyone ever said to me. It was hard to go out with other guys after that." They share a vivid and fond memory of their wedding, which took place in the Criminal Court Building in Brooklyn.

"They frisked us on the way in, which was very romantic," Julia says.

"We got married between two prostitution cases," Morris says. "And we celebrated with a whale-shaped cake from Carvel."

They have since become the parents of Nathaniel Hamilton Morris, and Julia has come to understand her husband well. Some time ago, she stopped in at the Strand Bookstore to pick up an order for him. The clerk who was helping her couldn't find the books and asked whether she knew the subject matter. "I don't know any of the titles," she said. "But they're probably about either insanity or murder or Nazis." Indeed, there was one of each.

"The Nazis, of course, are interesting to me," Morris once told me. "I just finished reading Joseph Goebbels' diary. You know a movie director Goebbels really liked? Frank Capra. I have this heartwarming image of Goebbels sneaking away from the office in midafternoon to go watch 'Meet John Doe' or 'Mr. Deeds Goes to Town.' "

WHAT Morris likes to call his "predilections" led him, in early 1985, to Dr. James Grigson, a Dallas psychiatrist. Under Texas law, a jury cannot impose the death penalty unless it is confident that a convicted person will commit future violent crimes. To encourage juries to arrive at that conclusion, Dr. Grigson for more than fifteen years regularly appeared as a prosecution witness in capital cases. In almost every instance, Dr. Grigson would, after examining a defendant, testify that he had found the individual in question to be an incurable sociopath, who it was "one hundred per cent certain" would kill again. When Morris first went to see Dr. Grigson, it was with the idea of making a film titled "Dr. Death." Grigson proved to be as obliging to Morris as he had been to the prosecutors he served, and encouraged him to interview several men who, helped along by Dr. Grigson's testimony, had received the death penalty. Don't be surprised if these fellows profess their innocence, Dr. Grigson warned; that, after all, is how sociopaths behave.

A number of the twenty-five or so inmates with whom Morris spoke made such a claim. One was a thirty-six-year-old man named Randall Dale Adams, who was an inmate of the Eastham Unit, a maximum-security prison in southeast Texas. In the spring of 1977, Adams had been convicted of and sentenced to die for the murder, the previous fall, of Robert Wood, a Dallas police officer. Wood had been shot five times by the driver of a car that he and his partner, Teresa Turko, had stopped in west Dallas for a minor traffic violation. Nearly a month elapsed between the murder of Wood and Adams' arrest. Adams told Morris that he had been framed, and that the actual killer was David Harris—"the kid," he kept calling him during that first conversation—who had been the principal prosecution witness at Adams' trial. Morris had not gone to Texas with the purpose of finding and becoming an advocate for innocent incarcerated men; he had gone there because of his fascination with Dr. Grigson. He didn't really believe the story Adams told him, because he had no particular reason to believe it. Nevertheless, he went to Austin three weeks later and read the transcripts of several trials. A number of passages in the Adams transcript aroused the possibility that Adams was telling the truth. After Morris met David Harris, two weeks later, in a bar outside Beaumont, his doubts about Adams' guilt and his curiosity about the case deepened.

This came at a time when Morris's film career was in another lull. Su-

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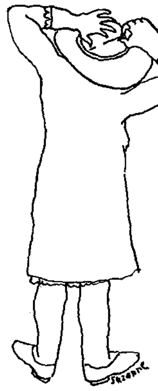
zanne Weil, then the head of programming for the Public Broadcasting System and a generous believer in Morris and his work, had arranged a grant sufficient for him to begin his research on "Dr. Death." (She once told me, "Errol is the one person in the world who, if he now came to me and said, 'I want to make a documentary titled "My Grandmother Remembers" or "So-and-So: Potter of the Southwest," ' I would tell, 'Go ahead.' ") Morris's main source of income at that point was free-lance employment with a private detective agency that specialized in Wall Street securities and commodities cases. Most of the agency's referrals came from law firms.

"When I worked as a detective, I felt like this well-paid conceptual cleaning lady for lawyers," he has said. "It's like— There seems to be hair clogging the drain. My job was to clean it out and find out if it was really hair. I had one particular problem: people would start talking to me and when I'd leave I often couldn't remember what they had said. I wanted to use a tape recorder, but my employer was totally opposed. So I worried about whether I was getting valuable information. I also worried about getting stains on my clothes—I had to wear suits all the time. Because I couldn't use a tape recorder, my most important piece of equipment was my can of K2r spot remover."

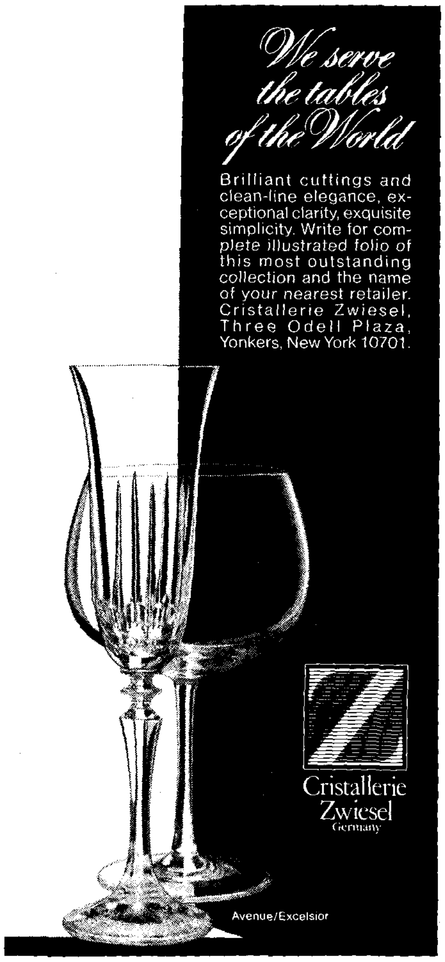


The owner of the detective agency, who prefers anonymity, told me that what he valued most about Morris was his talent as a listener—the talent that has served him so effectively as a filmmaker. What happened next was that Morris began to employ in his film work certain skills he was honing as a detective. As a "director-detective"—a phrase Morris used to describe himself when he was promoting "The Thin Blue Line"—not the least of his accomplishments was cultivating Henry Wade, for thirty-six years the District Attorney of Dallas County. Instead of handling the Adams prosecution himself, Wade assigned it to Douglas Mulder, one of his most experienced assistants. After gaining access to the files in Wade's office, Morris became convinced that Mulder had seriously tampered with the truth and that Adams had received *anything* but a fair trial.

Randall Adams and David Harris met by chance the morning before Officer Wood was killed. Adams had run out of gas and was walking along a road in west Dallas when Harris, a sixteen-year-old with an extensive criminal record, driving a car that he had stolen in his home town of Vidor, Texas, pulled over and offered to help him refill the tank. They spent the rest of the day, a Saturday, together—bumming around a shopping mall, drinking beer, visiting pawnshops, shooting pool, smoking marijuana. That evening, they ended up at a drive-in theatre that featured two soft-core-porn movies. Officer Wood was shot at twelve-thirty Sunday morning—almost three hours after Harris, according to Adams' testimony, had dropped him off at the motel where he was living. That became Adams' alibi: he was home asleep when the crime was committed.

Teresa Turko proved to be a poor eyewitness to the slaying of her patrol partner, and gave an inaccurate description of the car that the killer had been driving. The first break in the case came because David Harris, back in Vidor, told several friends that he had killed a policeman in Dallas. After being arrested and leading the Vidor police to the murder weapon, a .22-calibre handgun that belonged to his father, Harris was turned over to the Dallas police. At this point, he changed his story and said that he had only been bragging—that the real killer was a hitchhiker he had picked up and spent the day with. Which is how Adams, who had no prior criminal record, came to be charged with murder.

Initially, Adams was represented by Edith James, a lawyer whose criminal-trial experience included no homicide-defense work. She brought in as co-counsel a general practitioner named Dennis White. In one of White's previous head-to-heads with Doug Mulder, things had ended badly for his clients—two brothers named Ransonette who had made the mistake of kidnapping the daughter-in-law of a Dallas newspaper publisher. At the sentencing hearing in that case, White argued that the victim



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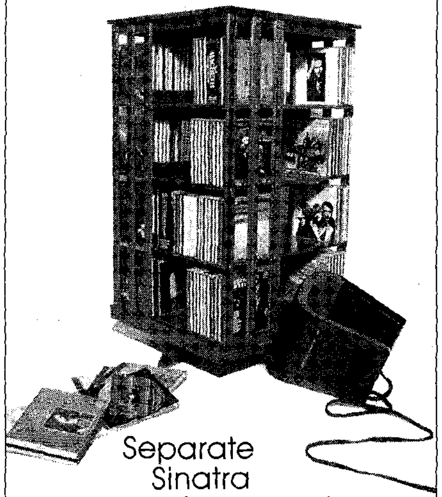

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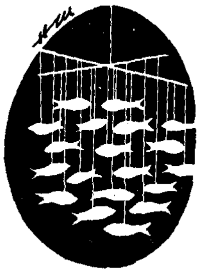
had not been harmed by her captors, and suggested a lenient prison term of five years. The prosecution mentioned a term of five thousand years. The jury, aspiring to Solomonic wisdom, said, in effect, "O.K. Let's compromise," and sentenced each defendant to five thousand and five years. Dennis White was simply no match for Doug Mulder, who is said to have once boasted, "Anybody can convict a guilty man. It takes talent to convict an innocent man."



Testifying during Adams' trial, David Harris offered a chronology of the events surrounding the murder that varied from Adams' version by approximately two and a half hours. Adams and Harris agreed that they had left the drive-in theatre during a movie called "Swinging Cheerleaders." Mulder elicited from Harris testimony that their departure had occurred shortly after midnight; Adams said they left around nine-thirty. In the D.A.'s files, Morris discovered a memorandum from Mulder's own chief investigator stating that there had been no late showing of "Swinging Cheerleaders" that night and that the final feature had ended shortly after ten o'clock.

This was the sort of serious defect in Harris's version of the facts that Mulder apparently had no intention of allowing to interfere with his prosecution of Adams—who, at twenty-eight, was eligible for capital punishment, whereas Harris, at sixteen, was not. It was also, unfortunately, the sort of discrepancy that Adams' attorneys failed to make clear to the jury. Nor were Edith James and Dennis White prepared when Mulder produced three mysterious witnesses, all of whom testified that they had driven past the scene of the crime moments before Officer Wood was murdered and that Randall Adams was in the driver's seat—the position from which the shots were fired. The three witnesses, Emily Miller, Robert Miller, and Michael Randell, all of whom were aware of a five-figure reward for information leading to the conviction of the killer, appeared in court on a Friday and impressed the jury. White, outmaneuvered by Mulder's strategy of presenting his "eyewitnesses" during the rebuttal phase rather than as part of his case-in-chief, conducted an ineffectual cross-examination. That weekend, White received a call from a woman named Elba Carr, who knew Emily and Robert Miller and expressed the opinion that "Emily Miller had never told the truth in her life." When, back in court the following Monday, White asked to question the Millers and Michael Randell further, Mulder told the judge that all three had left town or were otherwise unreachable. Actually, all three witnesses were still in Dallas. The Millers, in fact, were ensconced in the Alamo Plaza Motel as guests of Dallas County. Not until nine years later, when Morris came along and found in the District Attorney's files bills for phone calls that the Millers had made from the Alamo Plaza, did Mulder's role in this apparent deception become evident.

Toward the end of "The Thin Blue Line," Errol Morris asks David Harris, "Would you say that Adams is a pretty unlucky fellow?" and Harris responds, "Definitely—if it wasn't for bad luck, he wouldn't have had none." Ironically, of course, Harris's reply is accurate only up to the moment when Morris met Adams. Not only did Morris discover important evidence in the prosecution's files; he discovered the absence of some important documents—specifically, the official record of a police lineup at which, according to Emily Miller's trial testimony, she had positively identified Randall Adams. Most significantly, Morris tracked down the three rebuttal witnesses themselves and persuaded them to appear on film. Emily Miller, a bleached blonde, whose childhood ambition was to be a detective or the wife of a detective, told Morris that she had failed to identify Adams in the lineup but that a policeman had told her the correct suspect, "so that I wouldn't make that mistake again." Robert Miller told him, "I really didn't see anything." Michael Randell, who had testified in 1977 that he was on his way home from playing basketball when he drove past the murder scene, told Morris that in fact he had spent that evening in an adulterous endeavor and that he was drunk "out of my mind." Each of the state's rebuttal witnesses, it therefore appeared, had committed damaging perjury. Putting David Har-

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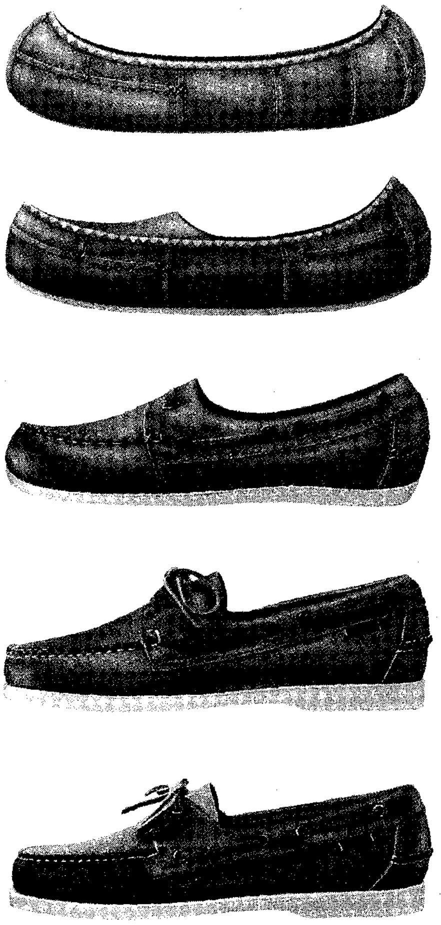

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ris on film posed a significant challenge. The first interview appointment, Morris says, Harris missed "because he was off killing somebody"—Mark Walter Mays, a Beaumont citizen, whose apartment Harris had broken into, and whose girlfriend he had abducted. Another interview had to be postponed when Harris tried to use Morris in an escape attempt from the jail where he was awaiting trial for these crimes. The climactic interview finally took place in the Lou Sterret Jail, in Dallas, by which time Harris had been convicted and sentenced to death for the Mays murder, and it included this exchange:

> Morris: Is he [Adams] innocent?
>
> Harris: Did you ask him?
>
> Morris: Well, he's always said he's been innocent.
>
> Harris: There you go. Didn't believe him, huh? Criminals always lie.
>
> Morris: Well, what do you think about whether or not he's innocent?
>
> Harris: I'm sure he is.
>
> Morris: How can you be sure?
>
> Harris: Because I'm the one that knows.

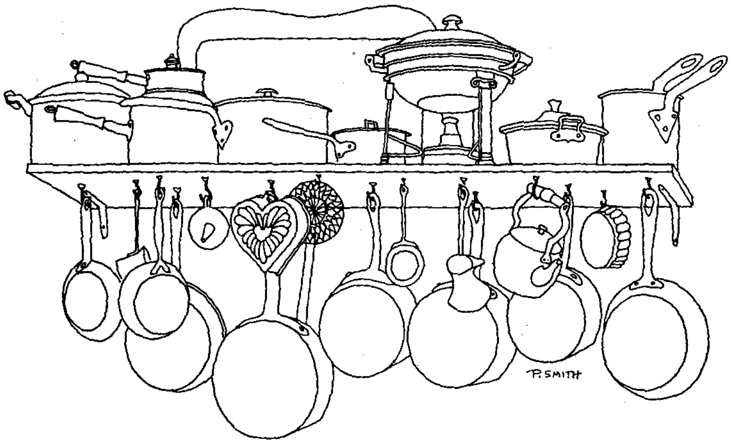
On a straightforward, realistic level, "The Thin Blue Line" is the story of how Adams got railroaded, the story of an innocent man wrongly accused. Its aura, however, is that of a dreadful fantasy, a mixture of the ghastly and the absurd. By any standard, it breaches the conventional definition of "documentary." Tom Luddy has said that "The Thin Blue Line" illustrates Morris's belief that cinema verité is "too mundane—that there is a way to heighten the structure of the facts." To accomplish this, Morris combines straight interviews—his unblinking talking-heads technique, from "Gates of Heaven" and "Vernon, Florida"—with artful restagings of certain incidents. The restaged episodes correspond to conflicting versions of "the facts" proposed by the people who appear in the interviews. Also, inserted throughout the film are closeups—of a gun, a mouth and a straw, a milkshake spilling, popcorn popping—that have a fetishistic quality, an exaggerated objectivity (evidence of Morris's passion for film noir). The "Rashomon"-like result is something considerably creepier than the cold-blooded murder that "The Thin Blue Line" explores.

The day before the interview with Harris, which took place December 5, 1986, Morris appeared in the courtroom of John Tolle, a federal magistrate in Dallas, who was presiding over a habeas-corpus hearing—an effort by Adams to win a new trial. In addition to Morris's oral testimony, unedited footage from his interviews with the prosecution witnesses became part of the court record. Watching these interviews—either unedited or as they appear in the final cut of "The Thin Blue Line"—one marvels at Morris's ability to win the confidence of so many people so prone to self-incrimination. On film, the witnesses against Adams seem to suffer collectively from the actor's nightmare—an instinctive fear of silence, terror at the thought of forgetting one's lines. Talking to Morris, they manage to discredit themselves thoroughly.

Under oath in Magistrate Tolle's courtroom, however, Emily Miller and Michael Randell tried to recant their statements to the filmmaker. Among the questions raised by Adams' habeas-corpus motion were: Had Adams been denied due process because he had not been effectively represented by his attorneys during his original trial, because of certain evidence that was illegally withheld from the jury during that trial, and because in 1980, when the United States Supreme Court overturned his death sentence (on a technical point involving jury selection), he received from the governor of Texas a commutation of the death sentence to life imprisonment rather than a new trial?

Morris returned to Magistrate Tolle's courtroom a month later, for the second, and last, day of the habeas-corpus hearing. Doug Mulder, by now a highly successful defense attorney, testified, responding to unwelcome questions from Adams' appellate lawyer, Randy Schaffer, with mumbled replies and lapses of memory. As the hearing ended, reason dictated that the magistrate would rule on Adams' petition within a few weeks. Tolle, however, turned out to be an even more gifted procrastinator than Morris. The New York Film Festival committee had expressed interest in showing "The Thin Blue Line" in September of 1987, but Morris failed to meet the deadline. Finally, on March 18, 1988, "The Thin Blue Line" had its première, at the San Francisco Film Festival. Morris appeared to be in buoyant spirits that day, and I asked him what he expected to do after the screening. "Oh, I imagine the usual lithium treatments," he said. "Followed by a period of hospitalization." A month later, "The Thin Blue Line" led off the USA Film Festival, in Dallas. Magistrate Tolle had yet to be heard from. Two more weeks passed—sixteen months had elapsed since the conclusion of the habeas-corpus hearing—and Tolle at last rendered his judgment: "All relief requested . . . denied." As far as Morris's role in the case was concerned, Tolle wrote, "much could be said about those videotape interviews, but nothing that would have any bearing on the matter before this court."

A week later, Randy Schaffer filed a motion asking that Tolle's opinion be set aside, because an astonishing fact had come to light: In the spring of 1977, on the heels of Adams' conviction for the murder of Officer Wood, Dennis White had filed a five-million-dollar lawsuit against Doug Mulder and Henry Wade, alleging that the District Attorney's conduct during the trial had violated the defendant's civil rights. John Tolle then worked in the civil division of the Dallas County District Attorney's office. White's suit had been briskly dismissed by a federal judge. After the screening at the USA Film Festival, Dennis White mentioned to Morris that he recalled Tolle's having been involved in the 1977 civil suit. The records of that litigation were dredged



from a file, and, sure enough, John Tolle's name was all over them: John Tolle had triumphantly represented Mulder and Wade. Somehow, not quite ten years later, Magistrate Tolle had decided that this coincidence did not disqualify him from rendering an opinion on Adams' habeas-corpus petition. Rather, he had chosen to hear the case, and had then sat on it for seventeen months before eventually ruling, in effect, in favor of his former client. The embarrassing revelation of Tolle's conflict of interest forced him to withdraw his recommendation; thus, an additional year and a half of Adams' life had been consumed by a proceeding that ultimately yielded irrelevance. Rather than start all over again in federal court, before a different magistrate, Schaffer decided to formally withdraw the writ and refile it in state court, citing new evidence that Adams had never received a fair trial.

Officer Robert Wood was murdered Thanksgiving weekend in 1976. Twelve years later almost to the day, Adams and his attorneys returned to the room where he had been convicted of the murder and handed a death sentence—Criminal District Court No. 2, on the fourth floor of the Dallas County Courthouse. By Texas statute, the judge who presides at a trial—in this instance, District Judge Don Metcalfe, whose evidentiary rulings against Adams formed part of the basis for the writ—also presides at any subsequent appellate-writ hearing. Adams' bad luck, while consistent, was not absolute, however, and Metcalfe had since left the bench. In 1984, he was succeeded by Larry W. Baraka, a respected former prosecutor and defense attorney, whose special distinction is that he is the only member of the Texas judiciary who is black, a Muslim, and a Republican.

On the eve of the hearing, I had a phone conversation with Morris. In New York the previous day, he told me, his secretary had taken a call from a stranger who said, "An important message for Errol Morris: Stay away from the hearing in Dallas on Wednesday. You might disappear"—a forewarning that brought to mind his experience in Vernon, Florida, a decade earlier, where, he had been informed, unfortunate people had a tendency to "just disappear."

"My stepfather told my wife I should wear two bulletproof vests, so that one covers the seams of the other," he continued. "I don't mind a death threat, as such, but I do mind the idea of disappearing. That's like the 'delete' button on your personal computer—'We deleted that character.' Disappearing suggests a whole set of unsavory possibilities."

As it turned out, I couldn't be in Dallas the opening day of the writ hearing, and thereby missed a memorable striptease by David Harris. Testifying for three hours, Harris said that he had been alone in a stolen car and in possession of a stolen gun when Wood pulled him over. In a videotaped interview that was introduced as evidence, he said that he had had his finger on the trigger as Wood approached him. Judge Baraka, no quibbler, announced, "As far as the court is concerned, he's in fact telling me he did it." Randy Schaffer read aloud a letter from Harris to his mother, written in September, 1988—just two months earlier—that said, "It seems like my whole life is surrounded by 'wrongs' of some kind and it seems like I've never done the right thing when I could and should have. Absolving Randall Dale Adams of any guilt is a difficult thing for me to do, but I must try to do so because he is innocent. That is the truth."

Next, Schaffer called Teresa Turko, Robert Wood's patrol partner, as a witness. He wanted to make plain to the judge that Turko's initial description of the killer, recorded immediately after the shooting, differed measurably from the one she had offered at Adams' trial. Dennis White had not cross-examined Turko about the first statement, because, in violation of a cardinal principle of criminal-trial procedure, Mulder had not given him a copy. Nor would the document have come to light, of course, if Morris had not insinuated himself into the Dallas District Attorney's good graces and scrutinized Mulder's old files.

When I caught up with Morris, at the end of the first day of the hearing, his mood was upbeat but not entirely sanguine. The drama of Harris's confession notwithstanding, it did not, in a technical sense, really help Adams. In Texas, evidence of innocence is insufficient to win a new trial. What Schaffer had to prove was that Adams' original trial had been "unfair" on constitu-

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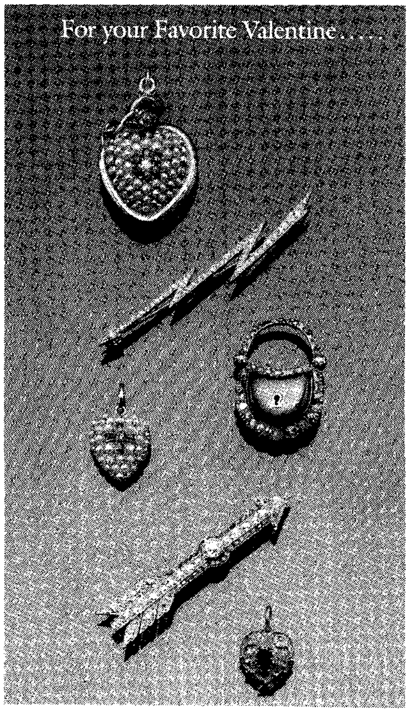
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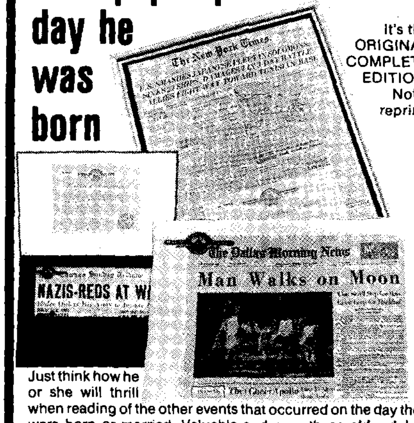

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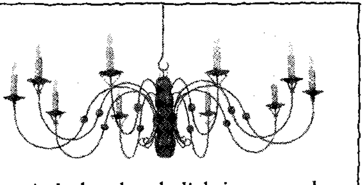

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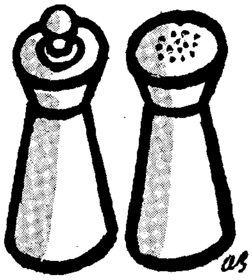
tional grounds. Even if Baraka were to grant Adams' writ, his ruling would have the effect only of a recommendation to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, a nine-judge panel, which in 1977 had unanimously upheld Adams' conviction. Harris's testimony was useful, however, in bolstering some of the other claims in the writ—most significantly, that Harris and Mulder had an understanding in 1977 whereby in exchange for testimony against Adams unresolved criminal charges against Harris in another county would be dropped. (Under cross-examination at the original trial, Harris had insisted that no quid pro quo existed—an avowal that Mulder has always maintained. Further harm to Adams was done when Judge Metcalfe refused even to allow into evidence the fact that Harris had such charges pending.)



Randall Adams wore the same outfit to court all three days of the hearing—a bright-orange jumpsuit with "DALLAS COUNTY JAIL" in black block letters stencilled on the back; leg irons; and handcuffs, which were attached to a chain around his waist. When Adams was escorted into the courtroom on Day Two, Morris had already arrived and taken a seat in the front row of the spectator section, between Adams' mother, Mildred, and his two sisters, Nancy Bapst and Mary Baugess. Two of Mildred Adams' sisters and their husbands had also come to Dallas for the hearing. George Preston, a lawyer who was assisting Randy Schaffer, leaned across a low partition that separated the spectators from the business end of the courtroom and showed Morris a printed sheet of paper, portions of which had been highlighted in yellow.

"This is from the Bar Association code," he said. "It regards tampering with witnesses and suppression of evidence."

"I'd like a copy of that," Morris said.

"Our Xerox machine broke, so I had to tear this page out of the book," Preston said.

"That page must have been missing from Doug Mulder's copy, too," Morris said.

The first witness on Day Two was Emily Miller. Randy Schaffer expected to score several points while she was on the stand: her failure to identify Adams in a lineup; the intervention of the Dallas policeman, who then pointed out to her the "right" suspect; her subsequent perjury regarding her performance at the lineup; and evidence that, like David Harris, she had struck an implicit deal with Mulder—specifically, her testimony against Adams in exchange for the dismissal of an outstanding robbery charge against her daughter.

A week after the murder of Robert Wood, at which time a twenty-thousand-dollar reward was being offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the killer, Emily Miller had given a formal statement to the Dallas police. According to what she saw while driving past the crime scene moments before the shooting, the suspect was "either a Mexican or a very light-skinned black man." That this description would divert suspicion from Adams, an auburn-haired Caucasian, perhaps explains why Mulder never showed the statement to Adams' attorneys. By the time of Adams' trial, Emily Miller's description of the killer had metamorphosed so that it matched the defendant. In Judge Baraka's courtroom, when Schaffer presented Emily Miller with a copy of her original statement she said that she had left her eyeglasses at home and couldn't read it. When Schaffer then read it to her and proceeded through a barbed interrogation, she said, "I don't remember nothing that happened back then. Specifics, I don't remember who asked me what or who said what or who did what. That was twelve years ago."

As far as the officer who had coached her at the police lineup was concerned, she said, "I didn't base nothing I said on anything anybody told me. It was what I seen. And I'm sorry I ever seen it."

"You're not the only one, I'm sure," Schaffer replied.

The subject of Errol Morris and his filmed interview with Emily Miller arose.

The witness turned to the judge and said, "May I get this clear on this videotape? This man [Morris] came to my house and told me that he was going to make a movie. . . . They were kicking it around in their heads about making a movie about the police shooting in Dallas. So I said O.K. He said, well, it would be interesting because, he said, 'In the first place, you're married to a black man.' This was his exact words. And I said, 'Well.' And he said, 'Do you mind? We're not sure we're going to film or anything. We're just going to kick it around.' And I said, 'Well, I don't exactly remember how everything went down back then.' And he said, 'Well, what the heck, it's just a movie, you know?' He said, 'Anything you don't remember . . . I'll remember for you.' Well, this went on . . . The movie wasn't accurate. It wasn't, you know . . . I went along because he said what the heck, it's a movie. . . . He . . . tried to make me look like trash."

During a recess, several reporters approached Morris—the courtroom was filled to capacity most of the three days of the hearing—and asked about Emily Miller's accusations. He pointed out that she had described the precise antithesis of his well-established interviewing style—his let-'em-talk-until-the-truth-flows technique—and he offered to roll the tape of the full interview for anyone who was interested. "She spoke extemporaneously, at length, without coaching, prodding, or interruption by me," he said. "It's quite clear that Emily Miller has no credibility."

Nevertheless, Emily Miller had accomplished something oddly significant: she had introduced the idea that "The Thin Blue Line" was a corrupt document. Months earlier, a reporter for the Dallas *Morning News* had said to Morris, "You know, Errol, there are two sides to every story," and he had replied, "Yeah, the truth and falsehood." Much as he still believed that about the Adams case, he also understood the mythology that attaches to movies, and he understood that in the iconography of this courtroom proceeding "The Thin Blue Line" had acquired a taint, as if it were some soiled version of the truth. Errol Morris, seated in the front row of the spectator section, wearing a blue plaid jacket, chinos, a white shirt, and a red paisley necktie, repeatedly heard himself referred to as "a filmmaker from New York"—a phrase chock-full of unflattering connotations. The word "movie" was chock-full of connotations. Robert Wood was dead, and Randall Adams had spent twelve years behind bars—those were virtually the only remaining unassailable truths. Almost every intervening fact had been tampered with by the police or lawyers or mysteriously motivated witnesses. In the immediate context, Randall Adams, in his jumpsuit, handcuffs, and leg irons, seated mutely with his back to the spectators, seemed more relevant to the proceeding than Robert Wood but less relevant than Errol Morris.

Other witnesses went out of their way to impugn Morris—most notably Gus Rose, a former homicide detective, whom Adams described in "The Thin Blue Line" as having pulled a gun on him during one interrogation session. Rose had come to court as the District Attorney's witness. During the direct examination by Leslie McFarlane, the appellate lawyer assigned to represent the Dallas County District Attorney, he made several statements that had Morris squirming in his seat and whispering to me things like "Don't these people get embarrassed lying? After all, this is only a man who was sentenced to death." Rose complained that Morris had misrepresented his intentions in soliciting an interview and then had been argumentative during the interview. "You should *hear* this interview," Morris said to me. "I'm barely present." When Rose testified that Adams had never denied murdering Robert Wood, Morris seethed,

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"That's a lie. He told me on film that Adams had denied it. This is all lies, lies, lies."

During cross-examination, Schaffer gave Rose reason to regret this particular portion of his testimony. Holding a transcript of "The Thin Blue Line"—proof of Rose's failure to keep his own story straight—Schaffer stood at the detective's side and read a passage in which Rose recalled that Adams, shortly after his arrest, "almost overacted his innocence." A hubbub arose in the spectator section, not unlike the inevitable moment when Perry Mason's assistant, Paul Drake, shows up with a previously elusive piece of physical evidence. A bearded man seated two rows behind Morris suddenly produced a videocassette of "The Thin Blue Line," and Morris relayed it to George Preston, who passed it to Schaffer, who was able to taunt Rose with it, asking whether he wanted to see a moving picture of himself uttering words directly at odds with the testimony he had just given.

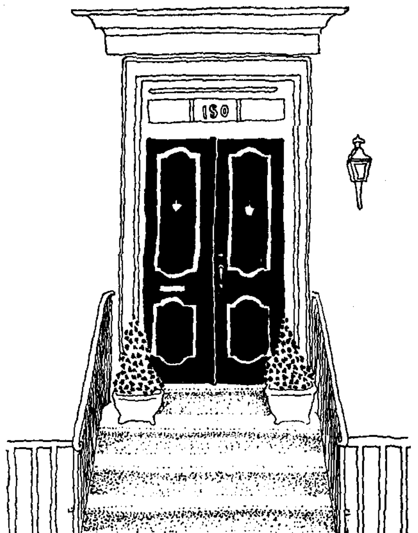
Trapped, Rose turned to Judge Baraka and said, "Your Honor, if the question is do I want to see the film the answer is no, I do not want to see the film or anything Errol Morris has anything to do with."

Baraka called a recess for lunch. In the hallway, I passed Mildred Adams, Randall's mother. A tall, broad-shouldered woman with light-blue eyes, blue-gray hair, and a beauty-shop permanent, Mrs. Adams was standing in a bath of bright light, being interviewed by a television reporter, saying not for the first or the last time, "If Dallas County will just admit that they made a mistake and let that boy come home . . ."

ONE evening, I went to the Dallas County jail to have a conversation with Randall Adams. I rode an elevator to the eighth floor of the courthouse building, signed in, presented a guard with a letter from Randy Schaffer authorizing my visit, and was directed to a pinkish-beige room about twice the size of a prison cell, along one wall of which was a row of telephone receivers and thick six-by-twelve-inch windows. Adams, standing on the opposite side of the wall and holding two adjacent receivers—one to each ear—was concluding a conversation with Nancy Bapst and Mary Baugess, his sisters. A black woman who had three children with her was talking on one of the other phones. When Nancy Bapst handed me her receiver, a wall clock said eight-forty-five—which meant that we didn't have long before the visiting hour would expire.

Adams and I discussed Randy Schaffer's aggressive style ("I need somebody who can intimidate. That's what you need") and Doug Mulder, who was scheduled to testify the next morning ("I know what those people did to me, but I have no personal animosity toward them"), and then I turned the subject to Errol Morris.

"If it wasn't for him . . . I sat down there in Huntsville and this man listened to me—I was pleading for somebody and this man listened," Adams began, in a flat voice, which, although it originated only a couple of feet away, sounded distant and disembodied, as if it had travelled through water. "Errol Morris, when I talked to him, I talked to him for one purpose and one purpose only: for the investigation of my case, whether good or bad. I told him, 'Whatever you want to do—you can dig into my closet if you will allow me to look at whatever you turn up.' I knew what these people had done to me, but I couldn't prove it. Randy Schaffer and Mel Bruder [another appellate lawyer], they didn't know. The only one who knew was Dennis White, but he was shook up entirely and he was devastated. I agreed to talk to Errol Morris on the condition that he would share with me what he found out. I like to call Errol the Easter Bunny. I needed somebody to gather up all these facts and put them in one basket. He went and did his investigative work, and everything we're doing now is because of what he did with his investigation of the facts. That is what 'The Thin Blue Line' did for me."



The next morning, Doug Mulder gave a poised and self-assured courtroom performance. As Leslie McFarlane lobbed him across-the-letters questions, Mulder, a handsome man in his late forties with a squarish face, not much of a neck, and a stocky, athletic build, effortlessly swatted them out of the ballpark.

McFarlane: "Everything that you discovered and everything that you reviewed in preparation for this case indicates Adams' guilt, is that correct? . . . Did you find anything inconsistent with that?"

Mulder: "Nothing that comes to mind, no."

Schaffer, when his turn arrived, proved somewhat less ingratiating. His gambit, for instance, went "Well, I guess today you've returned to the scene of one of your greatest triumphs." Leslie McFarlane objected to the argumentative tone, and the judge agreed with her, telling Schaffer, "That's not the way to start." From there on, Schaffer and Mulder duelled for more than an hour—until it was apparent that the judge had had enough and that Mulder was not going to throw up his hands and declare, "O.K., ya got me, my legal career's a shambles, I'm finished in this town." The judge's impatience with Schaffer belied the fact that he had already made up his mind on the basic question. After a masterly summation by Schaffer—sufficient in its eloquence for McFarlane, when her turn came, to apologize, accurately, that her closing argument would be notably devoid of eloquence—Baraka said he was ready with his decision.

Of the thirteen grounds for relief cited in Adams' writ, Baraka agreed on six: that Metcalfe, the original trial judge, had erroneously denied the admissibility of David Harris's prior criminal record; that Teresa Turko's initial statement describing the killer had been illegally suppressed; that, similarly, Emily Miller's initial statement describing the killer had been illegally suppressed; that evidence of Emily Miller's failure to identify Adams in the police lineup and subsequent coaching by a police officer had been suppressed; that Emily Miller had later committed perjury regarding her performance at the lineup; and that Adams had been denied effective assistance of counsel.

It seemed that, because Baraka had rejected seven of the contentions cited in the writ, a final observation he made was designed to eliminate any remaining ambiguity: "I think over all, when we look at this trial, all the nuances that are involved, I think there's no question that the defendant did not get a fair opportunity to a trial. I would not go so far as to say that the defendant is innocent of this. I would go so far as to say that if the defendant were to be retried, considering all the testimony elicited and what would be presented to the jury or a court, that more likely than not the defendant would be found not guilty."

The ruling did not mean that Adams was now at liberty to walk out of the courtroom; it meant that one judge officially believed that Adams had yet to receive a fair trial. As a practical matter, Baraka's recommendation could languish with the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals for months before a final ruling came down. And the court could, of course, reject Baraka's recommendation. Imminent freedom for Adams, in other words, was by no means a foregone conclusion. Knowing that Baraka lacked the authority to grant Adams bail in the meantime, Schaffer asked for it anyway, and the motion was denied. On that note, the hearing ended. There was applause, and a call for order from the court officers, and then the television and newspaper people were ready with their questions.

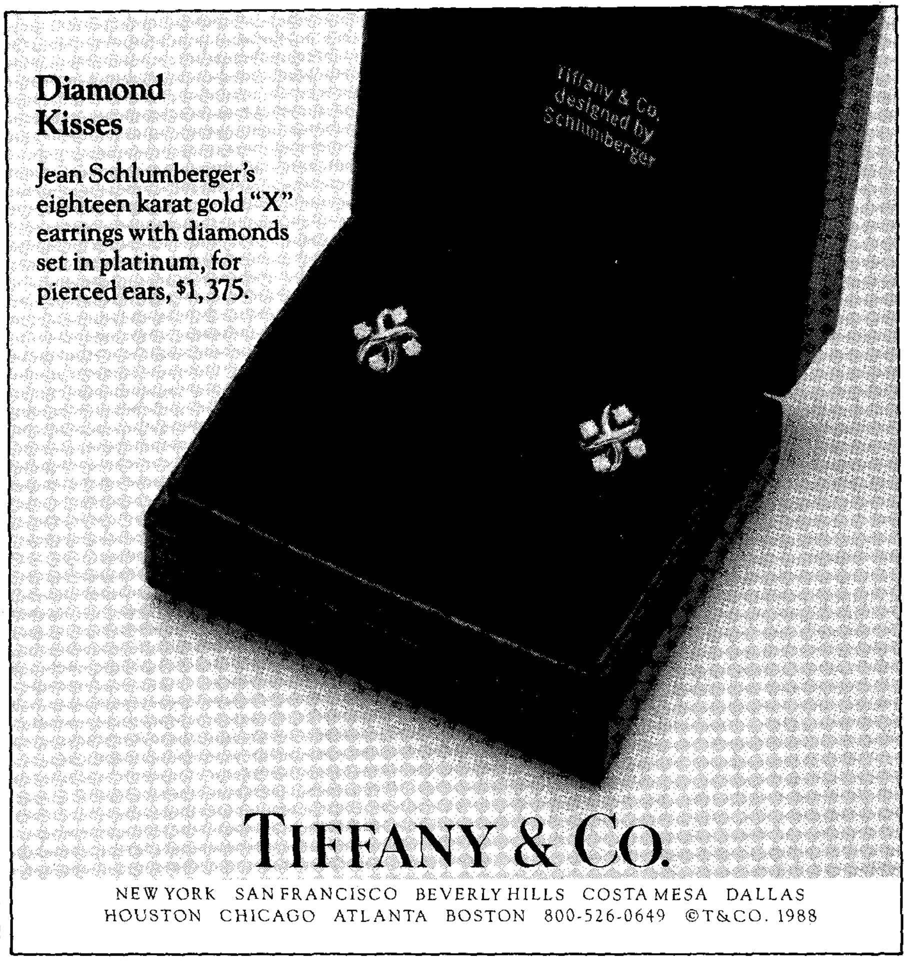
Adams, seated in a wooden armchair and still wearing handcuffs and leg irons, said he felt "numb"—the same word he had used in "The Thin Blue Line" to describe his frame of mind when, twelve years earlier, he heard himself sentenced to death.

A woman with a microphone asked Adams if he had anything to say to David Harris. No, he did not.

A reporter from *Newsday* asked, "Do you think you'd be here today if it hadn't been for Errol Morris?"

"Without the facts that came from the movie, no, I wouldn't be here in this courtroom today. We needed the facts, and the film helped. It helped immensely."

Roughly the same question was directed to Schaffer, who was standing



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nearby: "Do you consider that if the file that Errol Morris got out of Mr. Wade's office had not been found, we'd be here?"

In his summation, Schaffer had belittled the Dallas District Attorney, saying, "They'll give their file to a moviemaker, because he'll go out and make a movie and they'll be famous, but they won't give it to a defense attorney." Elaborating, he now said, "No, if Errol had not decided on his own that this was a story worth telling, Randall Adams would have been buried forever. Yes, that was the linchpin."

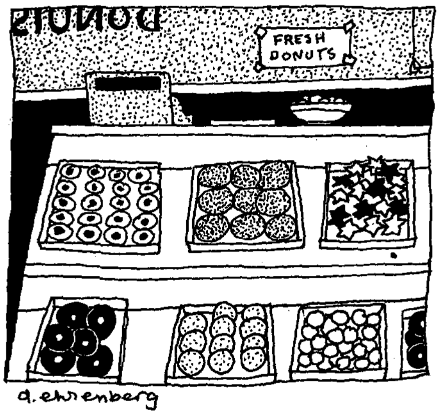
Mildred Adams, between bouts of crying for joy and kissing Morris and Schaffer and any willing members of the press, said she hoped people would remember Robert Wood and his family in their prayers. When the excitement had lasted close to half an hour, Morris suggested to Mrs. Adams that she and her daughters and sisters and brothers-in-law should join him for champagne at the Adolphus Hotel.

"Did I tell you what Randall Adams said to me about my movie?" Morris asked me as we headed for the hotel, a few blocks east of the courthouse. "He told me another inmate asked him, 'How come your case is being argued in the entertainment section of the newspaper?' And you know what Randall's response was? He said, 'I'll argue my case anywhere I can, any way I can.' "

"THE THIN BLUE LINE" made dozens of critics' lists of the ten best films of 1988; according to a survey by the Washington *Post*, in fact, it turned up on more ten-best lists than any other film. Both the New York Film Critics Circle and the National Society of Film Critics chose it as best documentary of 1988. An Academy Award nomination is highly likely. Although its box-office receipts have not extended into the "Roger Rabbit" or "Crocodile Dundee II" vicinity—at the end of the year, it was playing in fifteen theatres around the country—Morris no longer faces the prospect that he will soon again be working as a private detective or dodging collection agencies. Immediately before the writ hearing in Dallas, he was in Italy, where "The Thin Blue Line" was shown at a festival in Florence. On the same trip, he made stops in London—where he screened it for some people from the London Film Festival—and in Munich, where he met with Reinhold Messner, the legendary Alpine climber and the first man to have scaled all fourteen eight-thousand-metre peaks on earth (including Mt. Everest without oxygen). Messner was planning an ascent of Cerro del Toro, in Chile, and he wanted Morris—who happens to be an experienced rock climber—to accompany him and make a film. "I'm thinking of doing it," Morris said, in Dallas. "Messner's a terrifically interesting person. He told me he's been doing a lot of walking recently. You or I might assume he meant he was taking long strolls in his neighborhood. What he actually meant was that he had just walked across Tibet. And he's planning to walk across Antarctica. He told me some interesting stuff about meeting the yeti—you know, the abominable snowman. He's seen two—the red yeti and the black yeti. Messner was very reassuring. He said, 'The only thing you really have to be scared of is when you hear the black yeti whistling—whistling through his nose.' "

Heading off to South America with Messner would mean delaying a couple of other projects that Morris was eager to carry forward. He still had plans to complete "Dr. Death"—the movie he had intended to make before the Randall Adams case sidetracked him. He also hoped to direct "The Trial of King Boots," a feature-length examination of how an Old English sheepdog named King Boots—the most highly decorated performer in the annals of show-dog competition—became the only canine in Michigan history to be prosecuted, in effect, for homicide. Morris already had a vision of what the film's publicity posters would say: "Only Two People Know What Happened. One Is Dead. The Other Is a Dog."

If Morris could find the time to finish "Dr. Death," he might at last tie together an odd mélange of material: interviews with Dr. Grigson himself; action shots of a lion tamer; scenes from lab research on a mammal called the African naked mole rat; archival footage from an Edison silent film called "Electrocuting an Elephant"; and a meditation on Zoar, an extinct utopian community in Ohio. After a previous trip to Europe, Morris had told me with satisfaction about finding the right music to accompany the Zoar material. "It's called 'Yodeler Messen,' " he said. "I'd been hearing this stuff on the radio in Zurich, and then I went into a record store and asked whether they had any liturgical yodelling. They came up with 'Yodeler Messen.' It's, like, based on the idea that God might be hard of hearing."



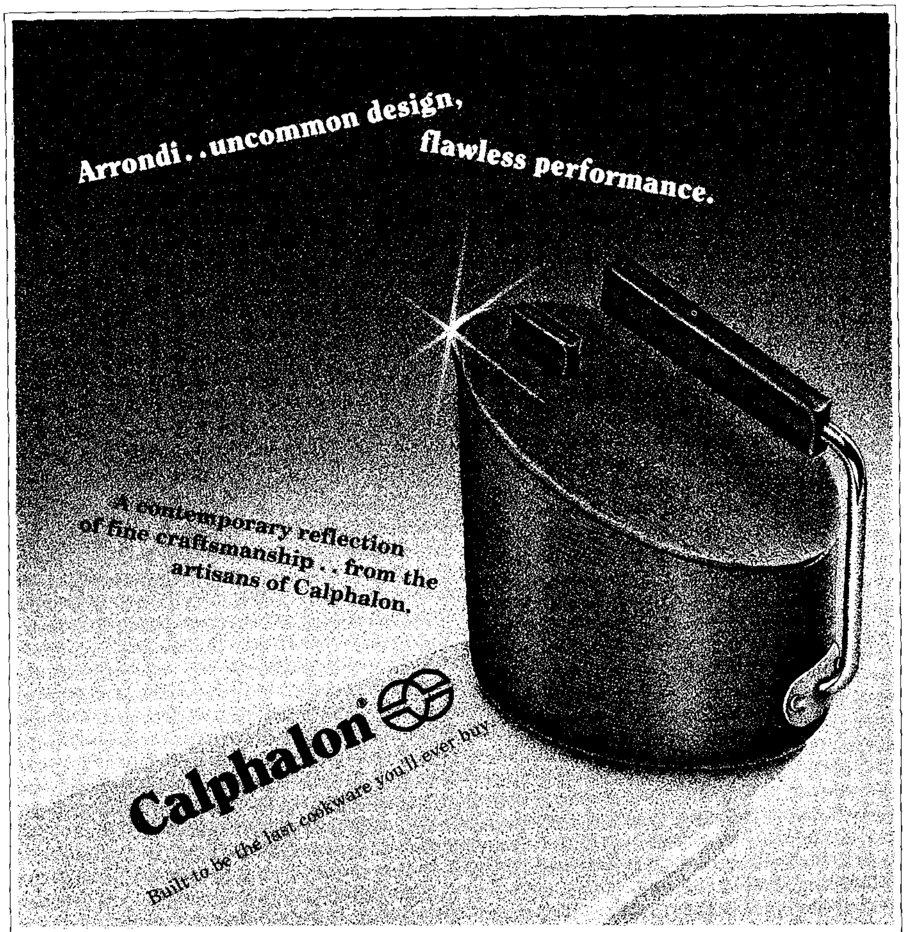
One afternoon, in his office near Times Square, Morris patiently tried to walk me through the connections between the elements that would compose "Dr. Death," an exercise that struck me as analogous to a journey along the scenic route from the right side of his brain to the left. He told me that his fascination with Dr. Grigson's disturbing theories of sociopathy and recidivism had aroused an interest in lion taming, and that in 1985 this led him to the eponymous ringleader of a circus act called Dave Hoover's Wild Animals. Of the three basic schools of lion taming—what Morris delineated as "the persuasive, mutual-respect school, the behaviorist school, and the chairs-whips-guns school"—Hoover subscribed to the third. Having filmed Hoover at work for several hours—the soundtrack consists mainly of scary roaring noises and the determined voice of Hoover saying, again and again, "Bongo! Come! Come to Daddy! Bad girl! Caesar! Get home, *Caesar!* Good boy!"—Morris was uncertain what to do with the footage.

"After I'd looked at this stuff awhile, I decided, Oh, no, I can't use this. It's too goofy," Morris said. "Then I got interested in the mole rats. What's the connection between the lion tamer and the mole rats? I don't know if there even is one. Mole rats spend their entire lives digging tunnels. They have a rigid social system. They're like wasps or bees—there's a queen and workers. Mole rats dig at random, looking for tubers. Maybe they find a tuber, or maybe they don't. They just dig away. At one point, I had thought the mole rats addressed the utopian ideal of what it would be like if there were no crime or criminals, if you could say hello to your neighbor and your neighbor would say hello in return and we'd all be assured that no one would attack us with an axe. Is aggression innate in mammals? Well, supposedly not in mole rats. The mole rat was thought to be the only mammal that lives in harmony with its fellow-mammals, its fellow mole rats. *The* only. But it turns out that mole rats are nonviolent only under certain circumstances—that, in fact, they can be really nasty critters after all, who at times really do seem to hate one another. When one colony of mole rats meets another, they can be extremely vicious. Anyway, that was my original idea—Dr. Grigson, lion tamers, mole rats. I then decided to add to this compote 'Electrocuting an Elephant'—which was, if anything, a miscarriage-of-justice story."

When it became clear that I was unfamiliar with the once popular habit—practiced during the first half of this century—of systematically executing "bad" elephants, Morris eagerly took a book from a shelf next to his desk and handed it to me. It was a prolifically illustrated memoir titled "I Loved Rogues," by George (Slim) Lewis and Byron Fish. Lewis was a passionate lover of elephants who spent most of his working life in the employ of zoos and circuses, and Fish was a newspaperman whose interest in elephants was that of an involved amateur. The book had chapter titles like "They Are Not House Pets" and "Ziggy Tries to Kill Me" and "How to Feed and Water Your Elephant." The foreword included a reproduction of a painting labelled "George Lewis and Tusko"—Tusko being a vast bull elephant who came close to being executed for doing something deemed bad. A photograph on the facing page, captioned "Byron Fish painting Wide Awake," showed Fish perched on an elephant's shoulder, giving the animal a cosmetic treatment with a bucket of oil made from horse fat. The phone rang. While Morris took the call, I wrote down some more interesting captions and passages:

"Occasionally the victim of an elephant's attack is a man who was hated for reasons of the elephant's own" (p. 29).

"Black Diamond seemed to know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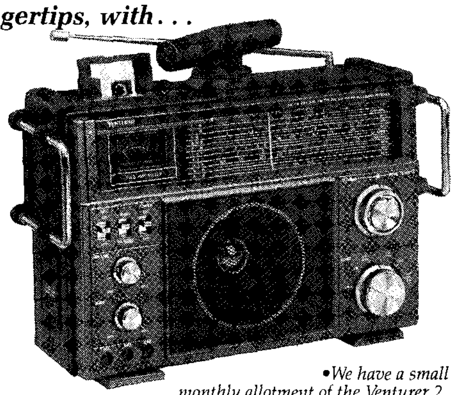

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that he was taking his last walk" (p. 47).

"After 170 shots by the firing squad, Diamond finally goes down" (p. 48).

"Joe Metcalf was another man Slim often met in his travels. The man with his head in the elephant's mouth was Alonzo Dever" (p. 62).

"Isn't that a wonderful book?" Morris said after he hung up. "I'd very much like to show you 'Electrocuting an Elephant.' This elephant, Topsy, was, if anything, a *good* elephant rather than a bad elephant. Topsy was being electrocuted because, as I understand it, some guy was smoking a cigarette and gave the cigarette to Topsy, burning the tip of her trunk. Now, the tip of an elephant's trunk is the most sensitive part of an elephant. Topsy picked this guy up, tossed him in the air a couple of times, and hurled him onto concrete. I ask you: Does Topsy deserve the juice for this? The film of Topsy's electrocution is a 1903 Edison short—one of the first times electricity was used in capital punishment. And, coincidentally, the equipment malfunctioned and the person who pulled the switch almost electrocuted himself while he was electrocuting Topsy."

Morris paused. We could hear the traffic on Broadway, two floors below, and from the editing room, ten feet away, we could hear a litany of "Come, Bongo!"s and "Home, Caesar!"s.

"My favorite line in 'Dr. Death,' I think, will be when the last living Zoarite is quoted as saying, 'Think of it—all those religions. They can't *all* be right. But they could all be wrong,' " Morris said. He looked down at his hands, massaged the tips of his little fingers—a characteristic tic—and then looked up, smiling his asymmetrical smile. "My two remaining ambitions are to have my picture hung up in my local Chinese restaurant and to have a sandwich named after me at the Stage Deli. And I guess I'll still keep making films. I always felt film was a good medium for me to work in, because if you don't finish, the level of embarrassment is so high."

—MARK SINGER

• •

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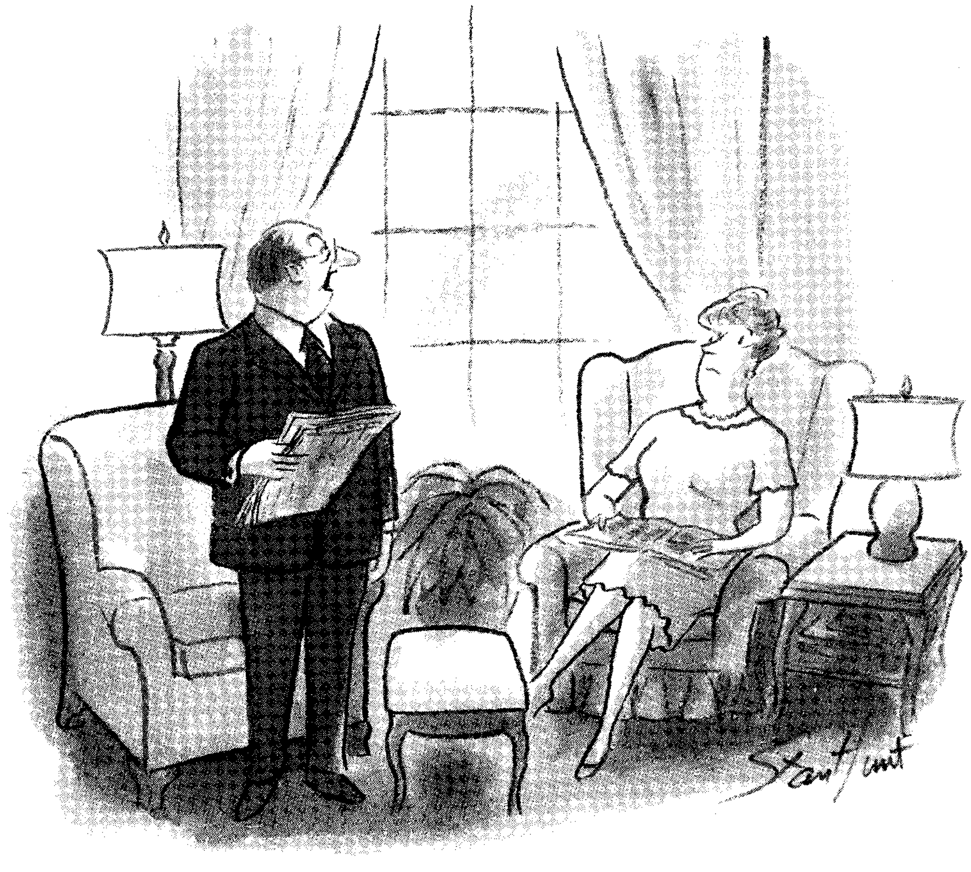
DANCING

Tap as Spectacle

THE blues originated as a vocal music, and the historians all agree that the first great blues singers were women. So top billing in “Black and Blue,” the new revue at the Minskoff, properly goes to Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith, a formidable trio of vocalists. The three of them enter together, rising straight out of the stage singing Ellas McDaniel’s “I’m a Woman.” That may not be how the blues began, but it’s a wonderful way to start a show dedicated to the blues tradition. Authenticity and reverence for tradition are hallmarks of Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created the show. Another hallmark is strength of conception. The tension between conception and authenticity is what makes “Black and Blue” a show, and not a documentary. It walks on two feet—feminine song and masculine dance. In fact, men also sang the blues in the early days. (Being mostly itinerants, they just didn’t get to record them and so set the styles, as the women did.) And though black women certainly danced, the dancing of the women in the show is entirely in the classic acoustic mode established by the men. This perspective on the past gives the show unity and sexual balance. I can think of a lot of things that have been left out of “Black and Blue,” but vision isn’t one of them.

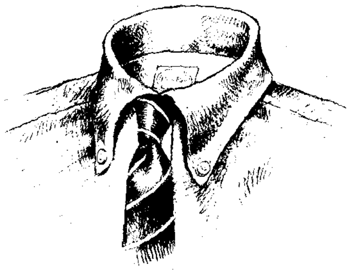
However, it’s the dancing and not the singing that makes “Black and Blue” a commemorative occasion similar to “Tango Argentino” and “Flamenco Puro.” Those two Segovia-Orezzoli shows were monuments to dance traditions that were dying or that survived against the grain of popular acceptance. “Black and Blue” honors the all but lost art of tap dancing, emphasis on the word “art.” Even though tap dancing is not unpopular—people like it—it is no longer an impulse present in popular music, the way blues singing is. (Some form of the blues always lives in popular entertainment—the blues is imperishable.) Whereas tap dancing—serious, deep-into-the-rhythm tap dancing—declined along with the jazz tradition that fostered it (and with the urban bias that fostered *that*). The dancers of the postwar bebop era, with an elegance reserved to last-of-the-line practitioners, seemed bent on refining themselves out of existence. The younger virtuosos then included Bunny Briggs and Jimmy Slyde and Ralph Brown and Lon Chaney—men who are the headliners in “Black and Blue.” I think it’s the first time any of them have ever been in a Broadway show. (No, Briggs did appear in “Are You With It?” in 1945.) Tap as show dancing, of course, had already died twice over by the time bebop set in—first when the jazz spirit went out of the musical theatre, and then when ballet came in. Tap has come back in the last decade; it’s now something of a Broadway specialty. But its slick handling by the majority of Broadway choreographers makes it, for me, an unwelcome specialty. In “Black and Blue,” rows of young people tap-dance with precision, and without looking panicky or overheated. It seems that classic jazz tap didn’t die, after all; it moved underground and stayed there, mentally tuned in to the jazz clubs of the late forties and early fifties. As a subculture, it spawned a second generation and a third. But without Segovia and Orezzoli to create a showcase I doubt that it could have sustained an entire evening on Broadway.

Watching “Black and Blue,” one can become obsessed with genre and provenance—the performing is that transparent. But as I watched I found myself growing less concerned with what had come about when and from whom, and more and more interested in the theatrical illusion that the producers wanted to create. Segovia and Orezzoli do more than produce; they also direct, and design scenery and costumes—the whole stage picture is their visualization. The material of “Black and Blue” is not exotic to a New Yorker, and the dance style looks frozen in time. Segovia and Orezzoli haven’t tried to unfreeze it. They let the three loud ladies create a good-time family atmosphere, and they let the lead dancers take us back to Small’s Paradise and the Hoofer’s Club. The show’s choreography is in the hands of members of this same genera-



“What do you mean, live and let live? I’ll do nothing of the sort.”

BAGGIER AND BETTER



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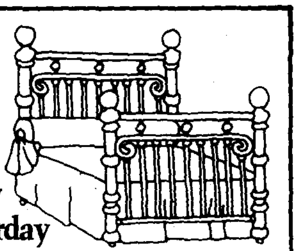

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tion. Henry LeTang, the veteran Broadway tap teacher and choreographer, staged the original version of the show in Paris, and for the New York edition Cholly Atkins (who was Honi Coles' partner) was called in, along with Fayard Nicholas, of the Nicholas Brothers, and Frankie Manning, a former Lindy Hopper. Backing it all is a band that includes the pianist Sir Roland Hanna, the drummer Grady Tate, and the jazz violinist Claude Williams. A tap-dance fan is dazzled by these credits and content with the conservative tone of the show. Of the chorus line in "Black and Blue" a fan says what was said of the line in "Shuffle Along," in 1921—that Broadway has never seen anything like it. Here is that exquisite subcultural *cult* of tap; here is a dream chorus. But then "Black and Blue" is a fan's show.

Though Segovia and Orezzoli are fans, they aren't New Yorkers. For them, the fact that tap dancing is history is enough to make it beautiful. Like sculptors, they cut and shape the blocks of amber the dances are preserved in, taking inspiration from the theatrical Expressionism of the twenties and thirties. The style extends to the patchwork suits the hoofers wear, which make them look like Cubistic hoboes or harlequins. The staging is as fastidious as in the two former Segovia-Orezzoli shows but not as starkly simple—it's opulent, even baroque. The orchestra is on rollers. People enter and exit through trapdoors or are suspended in air. (Carrie Smith, a performer of dignity, has the bad luck to appear in two overdesigned numbers; she sings one song reclining on a moving disk, and the other sitting on a trapeze with men below holding up the train of her gown.) Such is the frenzy, at times, of traps and panels and draperies and scrims that the show loses its glow and becomes defensive. Though I found everyone good to look at, it's true that tap isn't as visually pleasing as tango and flamenco. It's a fairly static spectacle, and tap quantified can be a pain. Most of the design ingenuity is lavished on the chorus line, and most of the time it looks like the best kind of Broadway pizzazz. But by the last quarter hour the kids are coming out in rolling crates, and you're beginning to wonder why other means weren't used to fend off monotony: why more of a role wasn't created for Dianne Walker, the only female dancer to be billed along with the male stars; or why the producers waited until Act II to take the charming young singer and dancer named Kyme out of the chorus; or why, having done so, they gave her the weakest song in the show, "I'm Confessin' (That I Love You)." In general, though, the offbeat musical taste is refreshing. The obligatory songs all have something unusual about their presentation. "St. Louis Blues" is sung—or growled—by Ruth Brown rather than by the shouter Linda Hopkins. Ellington's hymn "Come Sunday" is performed instead of the more predictable "Mood Indigo," and you hear the blues in the hymn. In Ruth Brown's interpretation of "Body and Soul," I heard what might be termed blues camp, but that, I suppose, is fair exchange for the sharp timing of her double-entendres in a song about a chair.

As for the tap elders—the Harlem masters who have kept the faith since the advent of rock and roll—it is a pleasure to salute them on this long-overdue occasion. Tap is ceremony, and in men like Bunny Briggs and Jimmy Slyde it has a kind of apostolic conviction. They aren't asked to carry the show—only to preside over it, to breathe on the flame. In the first half, Slyde skitters through "Stompin' at the Savoy," his elbows and jaw jutting like the Tin Man's. In the second half, Briggs gives us whisper-light traceries to "In a Sentimental Mood" and blinks his spaniel eyes at the applause. When it's all over, the two take hands with the rest of the cast, and one realizes that they were the only dancers who had solo spots. For all the show's investment in youthful energy, its emotional weight is in its old men, in what is past or passing. It's the hoofers' Götterdämmerung.

IN Harlem tap circles, the word "hoofer" is honorific. "You're not a dancer, you're a hoofer," Sammy Davis, Jr., tells Gregory Hines in a new movie, opening next week, called "Tap." And Hines knows this is the truth. The movie is a thirties-style semi-musical about the regeneration of a bad guy; it's a movie Cagney might have made, mixing his genres. Hines has a liberating role as the ex-con Max Washington, who tries to evade his vocation in dance, and he is exciting for the first time on the screen. His oval African mask of a face opens and takes on a sardonic gleam, and the plodding concentration he gives to his dancing looks energized; he becomes lyrically, and likably, glum. Hines' whole personality is a fusion of blues and jazz. I wish the movie had brought out of him more of that kind of music. But "Tap" has a divided mission: it wants to tell the movie audience about the tap world—about ghetto purity and Broadway commercialism—and it wants to leave that world behind, too. Tap, according to "Tap," has a future, and it's tied to rock. When Max finally breaks out of his confusion, it's to fulfill a plan hatched by the sagacious elder of the tap tribe (Davis) and a wild-haired audio engineer (Timmy Capello), who works at a jazz club. The engineer hooks Max up to a synthesizer, and Max makes his long-delayed comeback with a rock band, as an amplified percussion instrument. His taps go boom, and so does the movie.

"Tap" is very much a movie of the moment. Experiments *are* being made with electronic equipment and new types of sounding boards. Tap-Tronics, the patented system used in the film, is probably the most advanced. But the movie doesn't give any hint of how controversial the new tap technology is. It makes a critical issue of Max's comeback—he's the hoofers' crown prince, the only one who can carry on the tradition—yet in order to make a pact with rock and the movie audience it has to bury the tradition. It uses Sammy Davis as a badgering moralist (Davis plays Burgess Meredith to Hines' Sylvester Stallone); I'm glad it didn't use Briggs or Slyde or any of their buddies who also make guest appearances in the film—Harold Nicholas, Arthur Duncan, Steve Condos, Pat Rico. The great Sandman Sims is there, too, and is given the line "Rock and roll, that's what killed us." It's exactly what he would say, and all the others probably would, too. But Sims is playing himself as a grouch, so we pay him no mind. Here is a speech that Sandman Sims has delivered in real life (it comes from one of his interviews for the film): "Tap dancing is like being a drummer. The toes are the sticks—that's the melody—and the heels are the bass. The side of your foot is the cymbals and the ball of your foot is the tomtom and snare drum." Try retaining all those subtleties at one hundred decibels, with computer interface.

"Tap" has interesting bloodlines. Nick Castle, Jr., who wrote and directed it, is the son of the Hollywood choreographer Nick Castle, whose credits include "Orchestra Wives," "Summer Stock," and "Royal Wedding." Henry LeTang, who taught Hines and his brother Maurice, was retained as choreographer, and Gregory Hines has the same filial relation to the hoofers in life that he has in the film. He has even designated his own heir—fifteen-year-old Savion Glover, who represents the younger generation in the film, just as he does in "Black and Blue." "Tap" is the first feature film to be made about the kind of tap dancing that is analogous to jazz and about the close family connections among the dancers. But something prevents it from being completely forthright about its subject, and it isn't only the future of tap. Castle keeps trying to make it the kind of musical that was made in his father's day. He revives an old Rouben Mamoulian idea about rhythmic street sounds and builds it into a group number. A rooftop love scene between Hines and his girlfriend (Suzzanne Douglas) develops into a pastiche of Astaire and Rogers, and the music is Irving Berlin's "Cheek to Cheek." Castle even puts in a standard audition-rejection sequence. Racially speaking, the old movie musicals were white. "Tap" is black, and yet white people are all over it—in the hoofers' hangout, in the jazz club, in the dance studios, in the underworld Max fights not to be drawn back into. Some of this is believable, but a lot of it isn't—it's big-budget integration. The film says Times Square every time it means Harlem.

—ARLENE CROCE

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Last year I tried to attract a hummingbird by buying a feeder and filling it with sugary water. The only thing it attracted was hundreds of black ants. I'm taking a different tactic this year. I ordered a strumpet vine the other day for delivery in the spring.—*Delores Holmes in the Macomb (Ill.) Journal.*

You may end up with a lot worse than black ants.

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Toastmasters International Petaling Jaya Club will hold a *Letting off Steam* session at 7:30 pm, Dec. 14 at P.J. Hilton. Here's your chance to vent feelings of anger and frustration on any subject excepting politics, race, religion and other topics deemed sensitive.—*Kuala Lumpur Star.*

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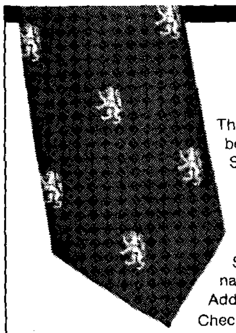

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

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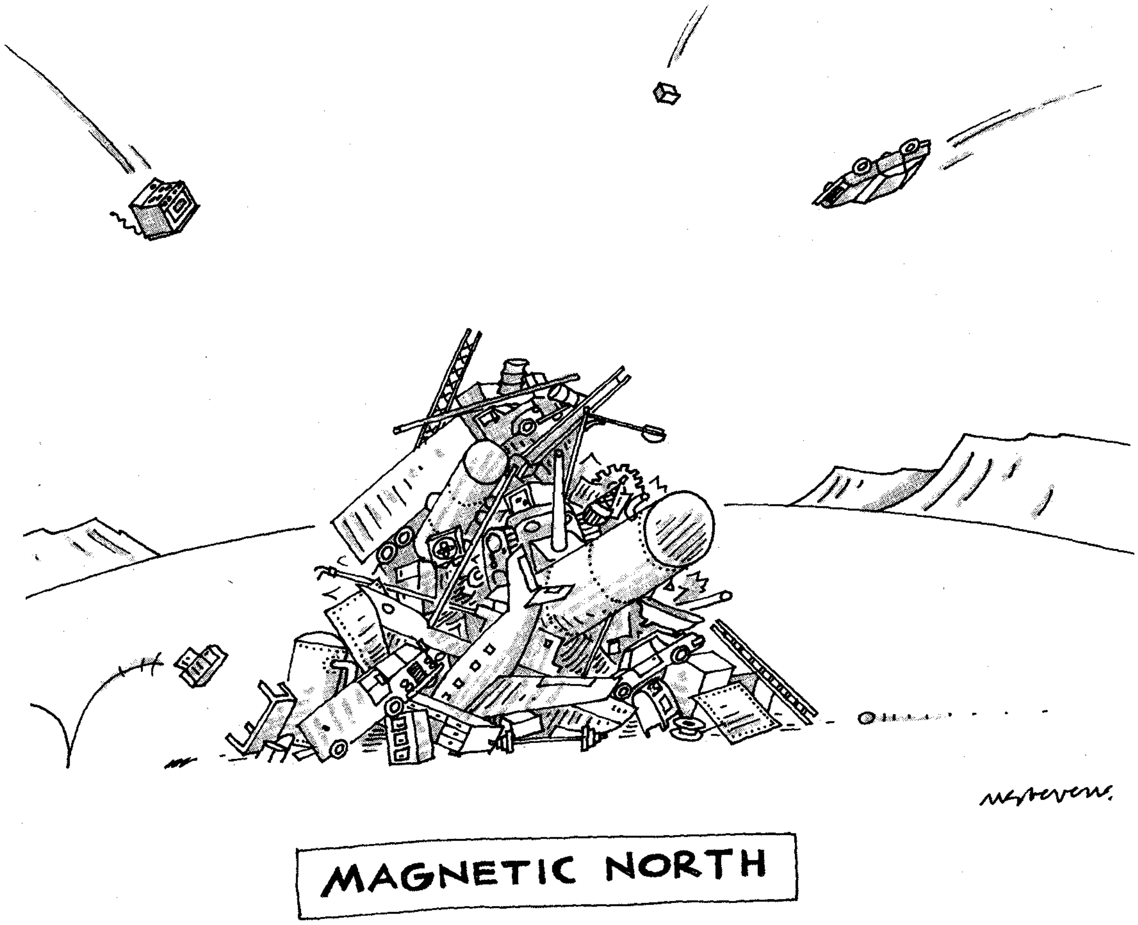
ONE October afternoon, as Hilbourne Frank and I were walking down the middle of a street in Codrington, the only village on the island of Barbuda, he stopped to watch a crew of men hanging lights from utility poles. The lights were for the week of festivities around Independence Day, November 1st—one of the biggest celebrations of the year—but the anniversary, commemorating the 1981 severing from Great Britain by the nation known as Antigua and Barbuda, brought only sadness to Frank. "Why should we celebrate independence?" he asked. "We are not independent. We should all remain indoors and not celebrate." He took off a pair of horn-rimmed glasses, letting them hang from a bit of string around his neck. "People on the outside have hardly heard of us. And people in Antigua seem to feel that we are just a village in the countryside, and not a people or a nation, though we have been a people and a nation throughout our history. We have the name of being a sister island of Antigua, an independent sister island of Antigua. That is only a name. In reality, we are worse than a subjugated dependency." After a brief pause, he turned to me, smiled, and said, "We have an expression here—we say that Barbuda is 'behind God's back.' "

Frank, a former schoolteacher who lived for many years in England, is a tall, fine-featured, slender man with a halo of white hair and with an avuncular demeanor and soft eyes, which give no hint of a strength of will that has enabled him to carry on, over a span of twenty years, two battles having to do with independence. The battles may appear to be contradictory, but they have had the same goal. As a member of the eleven-member Barbuda Council, which is the island's semi-autonomous governing body, Frank fought against the move to have Barbuda become independent from Great Britain; he wanted it to remain a Crown Colony. He lost that battle seven years ago, when Barbuda and Antigua, twenty-six miles to the south, became a single independent entity. He has also fought for Barbuda to become independent from Antigua—either to go it alone in the world or to become a ward of Great Britain or some other great power. At the heart of both struggles was the question of Barbuda's distinctiveness in a Caribbean that has become increasingly corrupted by tourism, development, and foreign domination. The battles were lonely ones. They took place in the intense isolation and parochialism of small-island politics. (Barbuda has an area of sixty-two square miles.) Issues of significance on Barbuda are of little interest to Antigua, are of no interest to the rest of the Caribbean, and are generally unknown to the outside world. For Barbuda, though, nothing is more important than the long-running and divisive issue of resolving its political destiny and deciding its future.

Barbuda (pronounced "Bar-*bew*-da") is about two hundred and fifty miles east of Puerto Rico. Unlike many Caribbean islands, it is not volcanic and mountainous; rather, it is a coral island, consisting primarily of a low, flat plain. A karstic, or jagged limestone, plateau, known as the Highlands, rises to about two hundred feet on the eastern side. The area around Hog Point, in the northeast, has numerous caves, some of which are said to contain ancient Indian drawings. Droughts are common on Barbuda. The land is a barely fertile scrub wilderness, dominated by thornbush and cactus and roamed by donkeys, feral cattle, and deer. Barbuda may be the only Caribbean island with a deer population—descendants of deer imported more than two centuries ago. Guinea fowl and wild hogs also roam the bush.



Situated at the eastern corner of the Leeward Islands, Barbuda lies outside the sweeping southward curve of its neighbors in the Lesser Antilles, and does not have, as many Caribbean islands do, the duality of a rough and wave-beaten "Atlantic side" and a calmer, shallower "Caribbean side." There is only the Atlantic side. A nautical chart of its waters warns mariners to exercise "extreme caution," because of inadequately surveyed reefs and uncharted coral heads. An abundance of shipwrecks around the breakers proves the soundness of the warning. Barbuda has a dearth of harbors; there has never been anything on this poor and inconsequential island to justify regular ship traffic. A small dock called the River, on the southwestern edge of the island, is exposed to storms from the south. A lagoon on the west side is a protected harbor, but the approach is through a reef, over coral heads, and into a shallow, twisting, and ever-changing channel, which intimidates almost everyone except Barbudans and the foolhardy. A heavy ground swell from the northwest makes the entrance impassable much of the time the first three or four months of each year. Until 1961, when regular air traffic from Antigua began, it could take a week to reach Barbuda, even from Antigua. The island, then, was cut off from a regular system of commerce and intercourse with other islands. Even today, Barbuda is so little known that Americans often confuse it with Barbados or Bermuda. It is one of the least populated islands in the Caribbean, and its approximately eighteen hundred people are ridiculed by Antiguans as backward and provincial, because it lacks safe water and resident doctors and dentists. The island is also ridiculed because the people are different; their quirky individuality stands out even in the Caribbean.

The greatest resource of the island is its shoreline: small, isolated cliff-wrapped beaches, miles of long pink sand beaches, Robinson Crusoe beaches, particularly on the eastern side, that even today are rarely marred by footprints. The island is also known for a frigate-bird rookery set among the mangroves northwest of the lagoon. Government figures show that there were three hundred and ninety employable people on Barbuda in 1987, one hundred and five of whom worked for the government. The largest commercial source of income is the Coco Point Lodge, a faded but expensive hotel complex that is said to have the loveliest beaches in the Caribbean. Some eighty Barbudans work there, and roughly the same number work as fishermen. Most of the remaining income on Barbuda is derived from pensions or from family members living abroad.

I had searched out Hilbourne Frank because he is considered the island's unofficial historian and because he is not only a member of the Barbuda Council but a former chairman of it. After the pause to watch the crew hanging lights for the Independence Day celebration, Frank and I walked toward his house along a sandy road that was lined with tiny frame and cement-block structures amid a profusion of color—bougainvillea, red ginger, hibiscus, frangipani, oleander, periwinkle. Much of the island's average annual rainfall, of less than forty inches, seemed to have fallen in recent days, and puddles of water stood in the yards and on the road. The air was filled with big mosquitoes. Dozens of sheep and goats were ambling toward their pens in the village after a day of roaming communal grazing lands. They barely avoided gridlock, and their passage left the warm air pungent.

When Frank and I reached his small house, in the middle of Codrington, he closed the windows and then carefully lit what appeared to be an incense burner and set it in the center of the floor. As we sat on an old mustard-and-brown plaid sofa, surrounded by stacks of books, legal documents, and scholarly articles, I asked why he was burning incense. He laughed softly, rubbed a hand slowly through his hair, and said that it was a "mosquito ring"—a device supposed to keep mosquitoes away. Then he turned to one of the stacks of papers and, in a slow, measured cadence, began telling me about Barbuda, an island that, depending upon one's point of view, has been either blessed or victimized by geography, history, and independence.

FOR decades after most of the eastern Caribbean was settled by Europeans, Barbuda remained a stock farm for neighboring islands and was populated almost entirely by slaves, because the island was frequently attacked by marauding Carib Indians. So when Frank talks of Barbuda's history he begins in 1685, when Charles II leased the island to Christopher and

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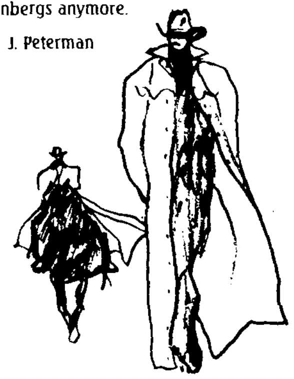

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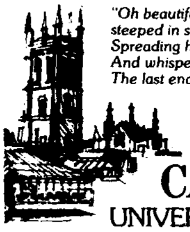

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—Matthew Arnold

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John Codrington, two wealthy Englishmen who in 1674 had established the first large sugar plantation on Antigua. Little is known of John, who was rumored to be a bit dotty, but Christopher, in 1690, became governor-general of the Leeward Islands. To lease Barbuda, the Codringtons paid "one Fat Sheep if demanded." For the next two centuries, while England, Spain, France, and Holland were developing colonial outposts in the Caribbean, Barbuda continued to be a privately leased island, virtually untouched by what was going on about it. Two of the most significant and still influential facts about Barbuda stem from the Codrington lease. First, the island has been a dependency of one sort or another for more than three centuries. Second, the island was never a plantation but, rather, was a source of stock and provisions for the Codrington sugar plantation on Antigua. Few Barbudan slaves were field hands; most were woodworkers, boatbuilders, weavers, sailmakers, fishermen, lobster divers, leather workers, and charcoal-makers, and they enjoyed the rare privilege of having only a handful of supervisors. From the beginning, Barbudans experienced a measure of independence and freedom known by slaves on few other Caribbean islands.

To talk of a self-reliant dependency may seem contradictory, but the geographic and climatic factors—remoteness, barren soil, xerophytic vegetation, droughts, dangerous reefs—that had for so long prevented the settlement of Barbuda made it an exceptional place in the plantation system of the West Indies. Slaves created a self-contained community that was known almost from the beginning for its cantankerous independent spirit. And at the bottom of this extraordinary self-reliance was the ability of Barbudans to do what no one else could do: use lands outside the village—as swidden garden plots in burned-off clearings, and as communal open range for animals to graze. In short, they accepted the island for what it was instead of trying to mold it into something it was not.

Riva Berleant-Schiller, a University of Connecticut anthropologist, who is one of the few American academicians to have done considerable research on Barbuda, finds it a matter of not inconsiderable irony that the continuity of Barbudan life has hung for nearly

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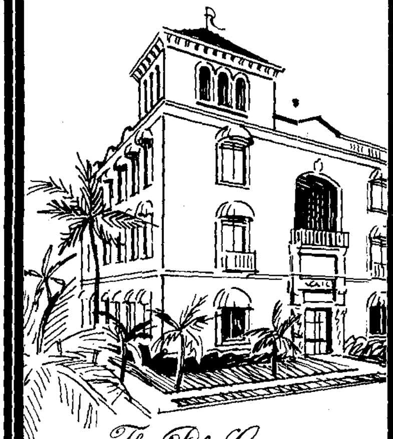

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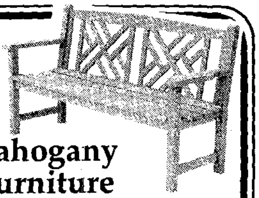

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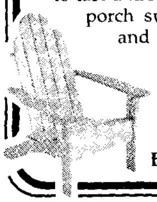

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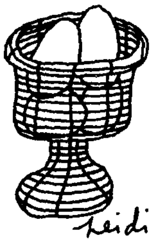
three hundred years on a wretched environment and on the solid resistance of islanders to all efforts by outsiders to change their way of life. British colonial masters and today's developers may have destroyed some of the ethnic cohesion and the environmental blessings of other islands—Antigua is a prime example—but on Barbuda it was not until the island became independent from Britain that ecological and sociological deterioration began.



Much of the information about Barbuda's history comes from the Codrington papers—the collection of letters and other documents written by generations of Codringtons. They tell us that as early as 1715 Barbudan slaves were allowed to own horses, cows, and sheep and to work their little gardens, where they grew pigeon peas, maize, squash, sweet potatoes, and groundnuts. The slaves were apparently free to roam the island. It is obvious that they used that license not only to engage in poaching Codrington game but also to practice a bit of trade on their own. In 1717, Christopher Codrington's nephew William ordered his overseer to seize trading boats landing on Barbuda, because they were bringing in guns to kill game. Berleant-Schiller says that since the island population was then about a hundred and twenty and included ninety-three slaves and twenty-four indentured servants "we are probably safe in the inference that the slave community developed a feeling of rights to the island along with their use of the island for themselves." Margaret Tweedy, a British scholar, once wrote that by the early nineteenth century slaves shot Codrington livestock, chose the best soil for their gardens, and ranged the bush whenever they liked. Barbudan slaves even used Codrington boats to send their livestock and the fresh meat from their poaching to Antigua, and in 1829 the Codringtons' island manager wrote of Barbudan slaves, "They acknowledge no master, and believe the island belongs to themselves."

A few years later, when the British bill for the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire was written, those who drafted it neglected to mention Barbuda. Apparently, they forgot about the island that had so long been and still was a private fief of the Codringtons. The fortunes of Barbuda were then being directed by Sir Bethel Codrington. Barbuda had similarly been ignored by most local British administrators until they realized that the island presented a set of arcane and onerous problems. In 1832, the British Leewards of Anguilla, Antigua, Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Montserrat, Nevis, Redonda, and St. Christopher were grouped under the administrative control of a governor-general, to whom the governor of each of these islands reported. But Barbuda was an administrative relic, with neither a legislative body nor representation on any other legislative body. Because it was a private estate, it had no local government. The Codringtons' boats on Barbuda paid customs duties to Antigua, but Barbudans paid no taxes to Antigua, and the island was not mentioned in any Antiguan laws.

When the governor-general of the Leewards visited Barbuda in March, 1834, a few months before Emancipation, the Barbudans complained that Codrington's agent was not sending them their regular allowance of salt meat and other provisions. The agent took this as an affront and responded by saying the Barbudans were insubordinate, and not only had recently refused to salvage a vessel but had plundered it for themselves. Three months later, Bethel Codrington wrote to the Colonial Office and complained that his five hundred slaves on Barbuda had "abandoned their former docility" and could not be controlled by his two white supervisors. He served notice that when they were emancipated they might not grow food on his island without his permission, nor might they import or export goods without his approval.

Leasing Barbuda to a private family for a century and a half had created some unique administrative problems for the Colonial Office. Barbuda had no freeholders or taxpayers, so there could be no locally elected officials. With no government and no revenue, there could be no colonial administration and no judiciary. There was no government through which public expenditures could be made for education, health, crime prevention, jails, or welfare. Codrington's agent was the justice of the peace, but he could hardly be objective in handling dis-

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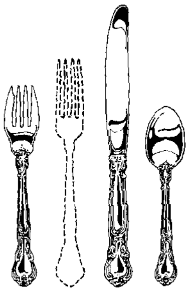

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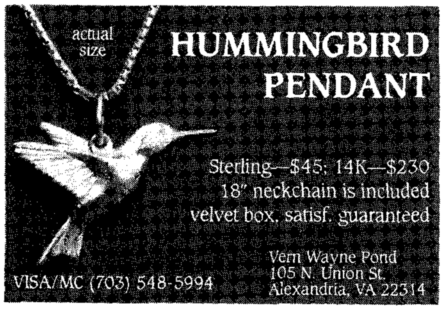

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putes with slaves who worked for him.

In 1835, the British twice asked the Antiguan legislature to pass an act including Barbuda in the laws of Antigua. But the Antiguans, who saw Barbuda as a poor and backward island, did not want to finance medical facilities, schools, clergy, and courts on Barbuda. Antigua's position was that it could no more pass laws for Barbuda than it could for any other Caribbean colony. Unshakable though this logic was, constant pressure from the British eventually caused Antigua to agree to provide a legislative umbrella for Barbuda—if, that is, the Crown endorsed its authority to do so, and doing so would cost Antigua nothing. So on August 1, 1860, primarily as a matter of bureaucratic convenience to Britain, an Order in Council issued at the Isle of Wight formally tied Barbuda to Antigua. But it was the Church of England, and not the Crown or Antigua, that set up a school system on Barbuda. The matter of medical facilities was simply ignored. And although the Barbudans had long ago learned to live together, so that there was little need for a judicial system, they were now technically bound by the laws of Antigua.

THROUGHOUT the Caribbean, the ownership of land has deep symbolic meaning for the descendants of slaves, but on no other island does that symbolism reach the intense depths that it does on Barbuda. As a matter of practice, though not of law, Barbudans had virtually owned their island since they were first brought there as slaves. And Hilbourne Frank and most other Barbudans will tell you that when the Codrington family at length surrendered the Barbuda lease, in 1870, they willed the island to the inhabitants—that the islanders were made tenants-in-common. This widely held belief ignores three basic facts: there are no documents supporting it; the Codringtons themselves were lessees, which is to say tenants, who surely knew they could not bequeath Crown land to a third party; and, considering the unrest that the Barbudans caused the Codringtons in the last years of the lease, it is doubtful whether the family would have willed the island to the Barbudans even if they had had the power to do so.

A series of unsuccessful leases followed the Codringtons'. They were unsuccessful because the British lessees tried to make Barbuda something it was not—an island where commercial agriculture could prosper. No matter who their landlords were, the Barbudans kept their way of life unchanged. Islanders continued their subsistence farming in small swidden plots, never claiming ownership of any particular piece of land, and thus insuring that no question was raised about ownership. They poached, and, according to local lore, burned cow dung to hide the scent of the meat while it was cooking, grazed their livestock on open range, and, as Berleant-Schiller puts it, "refused to work for wages on projects that threatened their accustomed ways." Ultimately, the failure of the leases led to Barbuda's becoming a Crown Colony, in 1899. In 1904, Parliament passed the Barbuda Ordinance, an act declaring Barbuda to be Crown land and Barbudans to be Crown tenants. The Ordinance also established a resident warden for the island. This meant that the Crown did not recognize common lands and that (since they paid no rent) the Barbudans were merely squatters. Although squatting on government land is common throughout the Caribbean—particularly in remote places, such as Jamaica's "Cockpit Country"—the Barbudans had never considered themselves squatters; they had always seen themselves as communal owners. This basic and extremely significant difference of opinion was virtually ignored for the next three-quarters of a century. Barbuda was of so little import that no one felt it worthwhile to confront the obstreperous islanders on the issue. And by not clarifying the issue the British allowed communal ownership of the land to continue as an established practice.

The failure of the Crown to confront the Barbudans over the impact of the Barbuda Ordinance at the time it was passed was followed, in 1915, by what came to be known as "the Polrosa affair." For perspective on the Polrosa affair, one must go back to the beginning of the Codrington tenure and appreciate the importance of an obscure clause in the lease which gave the Codrington family exclusive salvage rights to vessels stranded on the reefs of Barbuda. This was to be immensely profitable to the Codringtons, for Barbuda was often both the first and the last stop for many vessels bound from Europe for the West Indies. The island is low, and many a ship would be on the reefs before the captain had any inkling of danger. There is some evidence that the Codrington family aggressively pursued salvage work; after all, there is no record that they placed warning lights on top of the Highlands. And any captain who suspected that he had been tricked onto the dark and lonely coast could protest only to the lessee of the island. The Museum of Antigua and Barbuda—a small but comprehensive facility in St. John's, the capital of Antigua—has recorded a hundred and thirty-seven wrecks since 1695, but researchers suspect that there were many more. Two wrecks deserve special attention. On August 2, 1847, the French vessel Nouveau Justin went aground and was boarded by Barbudans. Even though the captain insisted he was still in command, islanders overwhelmed the crew and salvaged the vessel. In 1915, the Polrosa, a British government vessel, ran aground off Barbuda, and caused one of the most tumultuous events in the history of the island.

Frank gives a simple account that summarizes the Barbudans' collective beliefs about the incident. "The Codringtons had salvage rights. After the lessees left, those salvage rights belonged to the people of Barbuda. The government of Antigua wanted to usurp Barbudans' right to salvage. It was referred to as the Polrosa affair. The Polrosa was a large vessel that foundered on a reef. A hurricane about five years ago took it under."

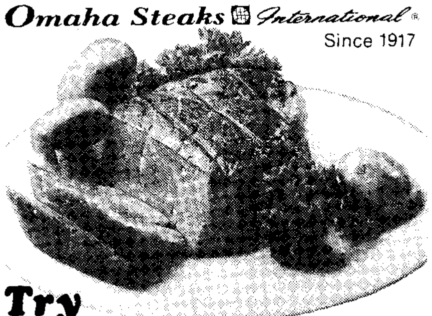
The official history of the event tells a somewhat different story. After the British vessel was wrecked, the island warden arrived to salvage the cargo and found the Barbudans already there and doing quite well with their own, illegal salvage work. Strong words were apparently exchanged, and later that day the warden's boat and wagon were burned. The governor-general of the Leeward Islands, who wanted to demonstrate that his office, and not the Barbudans, controlled the island, said that unless the Barbudans identified the thieves and arsonists he would impose ground rents and grazing taxes on all the islanders.

Refusing to betray the guilty parties, the Barbudans prepared a response that ignored the root offense and spoke instead of their "ancient rights." They clouded the issue further by saying that since Emancipation they had grown gardens without paying anyone and had grazed livestock without restriction. They said that no lessee of Barbuda had ever interfered with these rights, although, as Berleant-Schiller points out, it would have been more accurate to say that no lessee had ever been successful in interfering. The Barbudans went on to say that the Crown had never provided medical services or welfare and had never compensated islanders for damages to their gardens by government livestock. In short, they turned the government's legitimate objections into a platform from which they could petition the Crown to codify what to them were always the *only* issues: swidden farming and communal grazing.

As they had done so many times in the past, the Barbudans prevailed, and the island was left to itself in its backwater. The Polrosa affair caused the Colonial Office to wash its hands of Barbuda; the island simply wasn't worth the trouble it would take to make it a part of the system, to make it more or less like the other colonies in the eastern Caribbean. And for the next half century or so Barbuda continued to be protected by its remoteness and its intransigence.

IN the course of the past twenty-seven years, the former colonies of Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, the Bahamas, Grenada, Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, and St. Christopher and Nevis have, with considerable pride, abandoned centuries of British suzerainty to become independent Caribbean nations. For many, self-government is proving a heavy burden. Most of them are not doing well at all. For one thing, the islands are generally quite small; most of them would together fit inside Long Island. While the United Nations says that the size of a territory is irrelevant to its attaining nationhood, the size can be relevant to whether or not a nation—particularly an island nation—is economically viable. For another thing, the islands have almost no factories, assembly plants, or other manufacturing facilities—and, in fact, a social stigma is attached to working in such places when there are so many "glamorous" tourist-trade jobs, such as waitress and bartender. Furthermore, the islands have a serious lack of financing capability and often are forced to borrow money at commercial rates from outside sources. With few exceptions, the most notable being Jamaica (bauxite) and Trinidad and Tobago (oil), the islands are devoid of natural resources other than beaches. They are also prey to the recurring natural disasters of earthquake and hurricane. And they have an uncommon predilection for attracting, in addition to tourists, the detritus of American society—both slick developers seeking to hoodwink the locals out of beachfront property and barfly mercenaries carrying copies of *Soldier of Fortune*.

The farms and plantations of the West Indies, which were once world famous for their productivity, today have such low agricultural production that some islands must import staples such as milk, fruit, and vegetables. Islands that were once sources of extraordinary wealth must line up as supplicants before the developed countries of the world to obtain trade, loans, and grants. Most of the islands have exchanged a dependency on sugarcane for a dependency on tourism. When a country's wealth is based on what economists call "a single-sector dependency," and especially when it is one as notoriously unstable as tourism, disaster is a virtual certainty sooner or later. During the past twenty years, Jamaica's political unrest, St. Croix's violence, sky-high inflation on Barbados, and Trinidad's Black Power uprising have all demonstrated that tourism is an industry that can fade almost overnight and take years to return to previous levels. And—what is perhaps even more significant—tourism is an industry that presupposes an expensive and complex infrastructure. If part of that infrastructure, such as a sewer system for beachfront hotels, is inadequate and



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sewage is dumped into the ocean, the very resources that draw tourists are degraded. Reduced to basics, tourism in the Caribbean usually means affluent whites being waited on by poor blacks. Tourists call the tune, and the islanders must dance to it. Tourists will not change, so the islands have changed, often losing sight of their own identity in the process.

Antigua is a case study of the problems accompanying independence. Columbus discovered the island on his second voyage, in 1493, but apparently did not go ashore; he was content to claim the island and to name it, after the cathedral of Santa Maria de la Antigua in Seville. Antigua (pronounced "An-*tee*-ga" today) is nearly twice the size of Barbuda.

Sugar so dominated the Antiguan economy that after Emancipation many of the island's twenty-nine thousand manumitted slaves had no choice but to stay in the cane fields, performing the most gruelling physical labor from dawn to dusk, now for less than a shilling a day—a salary that would change by only a few pence over the next century. Even though they were free men in a British colony, these Antiguans often endured even greater deprivation than they had known as slaves. Unlike Barbuda, in its Caribbean backwater, where freed slaves conducted their lives as they had for almost two centuries, Antigua was a roiling caldron of discontent. In 1918, the slaves' descendants on Antigua revolted, and, in the ensuing riots, police shot and killed several people. The riots were quelled, and the sugar barons and the British colonial system remained unchanged. The workers' lives continued to be dominated by a grinding, merciless poverty, which kept them subordinate to the British. Most of the islands were then learning the bitter economic lesson that goes with single-sector dependency: when sugar prices fell, sugar plantations went broke and mass unemployment was the rule. Antigua, with its frequent droughts, may have fared worse than many of the others. "Antigua was a land of misery and depression, an island of slums and hovels, of barefooted, unkempt people," the Antiguan poet and social critic Novelle H. Richards wrote in "The Struggle and the Conquest," a book describing the emergence of the trade-union movement on Antigua.

Many of the political leaders in the British Caribbean who presided over their countries' internal affairs during the transition from colonial status to independence were men who had come to prominence through the labor movement. No one exemplifies the process better than Vere Cornwall Bird, the current Prime Minister of Antigua and a man revered not only as his country's George Washington but as the senior government leader of the Caribbean. Bird was born in one of Antigua's worst slums, and had only an elementary-school education. He joined the Salvation Army while he was in his teens and became a captain, but soon left, reportedly because of racism. In September, 1943, Bird was elected president of the Antigua Trades and Labour Union. As in most Caribbean countries, the personality of the union leader played an important part both in holding the union together and in increasing its membership. Bird, perhaps because of his religious background with the Salvation Army, was felt to have about him a certain mysticism and was already being called Papa Bird.

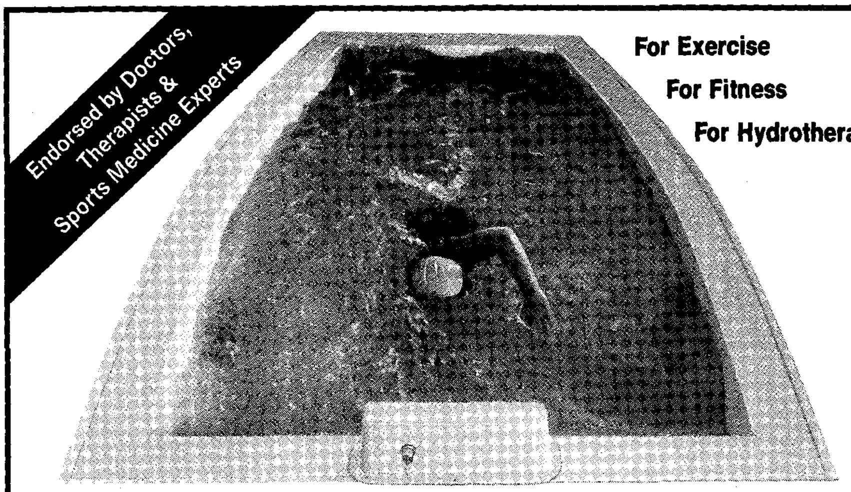
In 1945, Bird was elected to Antigua's Legislative Council in a by-election. After the regular election, in 1946, he was appointed to the Legislative Council's Executive Council—one of the highest offices on the island. In 1966, he played a leading role at a constitutional conference held in London which provided a framework whereby, in February, 1967, Antigua became one of the first Associated States of Britain in the Eastern Caribbean. Under the provisions of Associated Statehood, Barbuda and the uninhabited island of Redonda, about thirty miles southwest of Antigua, were made dependencies of Antigua.

"And you, Howard? Are you fully committed to taking this woman for your lawfully wedded wife?"

IN the eyes of the Barbudans, Associated Statehood further codified their subordinate status to Antigua—to a people who raided their fish pots and patronized them as the bumpkins of the Caribbean. While the Barbudans were ignored and neglected under the colonial system, they had resisted numerous efforts by the various lessees to get them to engage in commercial farming, but Associated Statehood meant that new types of entrepreneurs, with new ideas about development, were beginning to look upon their island and to like what they saw. Hotel developers saw mile after mile of empty pink beach. The droughts that had for so long prevented successful commercial farming seemed ready-made for tourists, who wanted no rain during their visits. The naturally flat terrain, with its meagre scrub growth, needed only minimal work to become golf courses. The Barbudans knew that Associated Statehood would bring the outside world knocking at their door, and they feared that Antigua would open the door. It had been something of an annoyance to them in the past that Barbuda was linked with Antigua, but now the very essence of Barbudan life—land control—could be threatened. Thus was born a feeling that if Barbuda could not remain a ward of the Crown it should be separated from Antigua and make its way in the world alone—that it would be better off as an independent ministate of some twelve hundred people than as a dependency of Antigua.

Two years after Associated Statehood, a Canadian development group asked the Antiguan government to grant it exclusive development rights on Barbuda. The Canadians wanted to build a marina and hotels. In return, they offered to bring Barbuda into the twentieth century by providing electricity, a telephone system, paved roads, and piped water. Everything would be financed by selling Barbudan land to foreigners. The Antiguan central government approved the project and would have ignored Barbudan opposition if the British had not intervened, saying that no project on Barbuda should be considered unless it had been approved by the Barbudans.

The Barbudans, who saw the Canadian venture as the first of many efforts by Antigua to develop their island, thereupon sent Britain their first petition for separation from Antigua. This was a remarkable step, not only because of the ambitious nature of the petition but because of the unanimity—on an island constantly atwitter with gossip and feuds and squabbling—that prompted it. The British rejected the petition for separation. Not long afterward, the Antiguan government offered to grant land titles to Barbudans who built new homes outside Codrington. Living outside the village had been prohibited by law since the days of the Codrington lease, and almost no one living inside the village had a title to his home. The system of communal land was such a part of the Barbudan psyche that the people immediately responded negatively to what they saw



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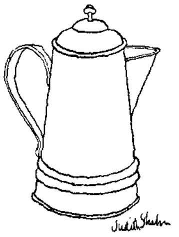
as a ploy by Antigua. In 1973, the *Barbuda Voice*, the official newspaper of Barbuda, which is published in the Bronx, ran a story saying, "Never accept a title deed from any Government for land. . . . People of my Island, such things are dangerous to our birthright!" (Russell John, the editor of the newspaper, says that there are some three thousand Barbudans in New York—almost twice the number of people on the island.)

Meanwhile, on Antigua, the Bird government found that once the glory of being one of the first islands in the eastern Caribbean to achieve Associated Statehood had passed, certain harsh political realities had to be confronted. The 1971 elections brought an opposition party into power. Bird and his followers, who had been leaders of the country since 1939, were tossed out of the government, and, by all accounts, they found it a bitter experience. The new government found the experience of governing equally bitter, for the sugar industry was close to failure and the worldwide fuel crisis caused severe problems in the tourist industry. The economy of Antigua, always shaky, took a sharp dive.

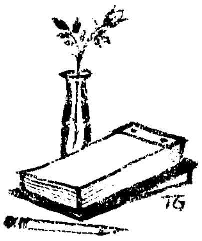


In 1976, Bird's Antigua Labour Party was returned to power, and he carried two of his sons, Vere, Jr., and Lester, into office as government ministers. Vere, Jr., a quiet and introspective man who is fascinated by high-powered radio-communications equipment and electronic gear of all sorts, was appointed chairman of the Antigua Public Utilities Authority. Lester then held the titles of Deputy Premier and Minister of Economic Development, Tourism, and Energy. (He later became Minister of External Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister.) Lester is a big, smiling, gregarious man, smooth and articulate—a public person who enjoys the banter of vigorous island politics. From the beginning, it was assumed that one day he would take over from his father. Lester has travelled to South Korea, India, China, and Nigeria, and often speaks out against apartheid in South Africa. At the United Nations, he complained that the world powers were carving up Antarctica. His efforts to gather Caribbean support for a U.N. resolution seeking ways for all countries to benefit from Antarctic resources left his Antiguan colleagues more baffled than supportive.

One of the first things the Bird regime undertook upon returning to office was an attempt to mollify the growing unrest of the Barbudans. The Prime Minister reminded Barbudan voters that he had special ties to the island, for his wife was a Barbudan and his sons were thus half Barbudan. The Antiguan Parliament swiftly passed a Local Government Act establishing the Barbuda Council, the island's first self-governing body, and an election for seats on it was held in January, 1977, and won by candidates backed by Bird's Antigua Labour Party. Several opposition candidates also ran and, after losing the election, began working on another petition to the British government seeking separation from Antigua. Berleant-Schiller says that the petition cited a number of Antiguan attempts to sell Barbudan beaches to outsiders. She says that the Antiguan government "repeatedly bypassed, harassed and pressured" Barbudan officials to sell lands "for the benefit of Antigua." This second petition, which was submitted to Britain in 1978, foreshadowed the candor that has marked political dialogue in Antigua and Barbuda ever since by saying that joint independence for Antigua and Barbuda would give Antigua "sovereign rights over the lands and beaches of the Island and in the name of 'Development' make land deals with enterprising foreigners and use the money obtained to swell their bank balances in overseas secret accounts, reduce or pay off the huge debts that Antigua has incurred over the years, as well as assist in the numerous ambitious programmes they have for the development of Antigua."

At the 1978 convention of the Antigua Labour Party, Lester Bird, who had become the Party chairman, called for full independence from Great Britain. During the 1980 general elections, the A.L.P. won all seats except the Barbuda constituency. That seat had been held since 1978 by a secessionist businessman named Eric Burton, a muscular middle-aged man who is probably the wealthiest person on Barbuda. He owns the grocery store and the general store, leases a government-owned hotel, the Sunset View, and has a wide range of fishing and farming interests. But he is heavily in debt, and a few years ago he became an outspoken critic of the owner of Coco Point Lodge, a Cincinnati lawyer named William Cody Kelly, when Kelly refused to lend him ninety thousand dollars. Burton is sometimes referred to as Mr. Cardboard by his constituents, because he once made a speech about the amount of litter near the Antigua airport. Toward the end of 1980, a conference on independence was convened at Lancaster House, in London. But the issue of independence for Antigua was confused by Barbuda's threat to secede from the new nation of Antigua and Barbuda. The Barbuda delegation wanted the communal-land laws, established by centuries of practice, to continue, and wanted to have control over any land leases to foreigners. Burton told the conference chairman that the Barbudans were prepared to undertake full independence on their own. And Arthur Nibbs, a young political leader who is now the chairman of the Barbuda Council, appeared on the BBC and said that Barbudans would prefer mass suicides on the beaches to independence in conjunction with Antigua. The Antiguans, however, were determined to maintain their control of Barbuda and pointed to the existence of the Barbuda Council as an example of their good intentions toward Barbuda.

In July, 1981, Parliament passed the Antigua Termination of Association Act and established another Caribbean ministate, the independent nation of Antigua and Barbuda. Barbuda had been, in the phrase of Berleant-Schiller, "condemned to independence." Less than a year later, the Antiguan central government passed a law declaring that it had the discretion to decide whether Barbudans could own land on Barbuda. While this had been more or less expected, something that had not been expected was the Barbudan response. The solidarity earlier manifested in the secession movement was gone. Hilbourne Frank, then the chairman of the Barbuda Council, stuck with his beliefs and said the bill was the first step toward "eventual privatization of the lands which have been held in common since Emancipation and to date have not been sold or purchased by anybody," and that it "erodes the traditional, customary and constitutional authority handed down to the Council." But Eric Burton had changed his mind: he supported the legislation and praised the Antiguan government. Each man reflected the feelings of his constituency. As Berleant-Schiller says, the point is that "the disparity between the two responses is itself a manifestation of change: Barbudan solidarity has begun to crumble, and social unity founded on common lands to give way to divergent interests founded on private property." The next elections on Barbuda were even more revealing of the schism that inevitably comes when those who live in the Caribbean confront the dilemma of how much development is enough. In 1984, Eric Burton kept his seat on a platform of coöperation and accommodation with Antigua. In the Barbuda Council election in 1985, Hilbourne Frank's separatist party, which had had a majority of seats on the Council since 1979, lost every seat it contested. But in the 1987 Council election Frank's party won all four of the contested seats. Thus, it is difficult to measure the strength of the independence movement today. At Peter's, a small, tin-roofed bar in Codrington that is the hangout of local fishermen, lobster divers seem to favor being separate from Antigua. And Cohen DeSouza, a twenty-year-old guide who is saving his money so he can move to New York, told me, "The most feeling I hear is that people want to be separate." One manifestation of this feeling is the local sport of raiding the fish pots of Antiguan fisherman who venture into Barbudan waters. But Burton, a guarded and wary man, not only supports the central government but talks of the commercial development of Barbuda.



Arthur Nibbs, the current Council chairman and a pivotal figure in everything that happens, is too agile to be pinned down on the issue. He says that although Barbuda is legally bound to Antigua, the Antiguan government is treating the island unfairly. He told me he favored independence, because, depending upon whether Barbuda went it alone or became the ward of a great power, he could become either Premier or Chief Minister. And he tells Barbudans that the independence of which he speaks is an economic independence.

Nibbs was the speaker at the Inde-

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pendence Day celebration on Barbuda that I attended. For the public gathering, he wore a neatly creased tan guayabera shirt and dark slacks rather than the mesh shirt and gold earring he often sports. He spoke at an intersection in Codrington known as Madison Square, near the general store, the grocery store, and the bank. It was late in the afternoon, almost dark, and a P.A. system on the back of a dump truck blared calypso music across the village. Some thirty people lolled about the intersection; Hilbourne Frank was not among them, but, like other villagers not in attendance, he would have little trouble hearing the speech over the P.A. system. Spavined dogs barked and jumped around. Cars and trucks bounced through the intersection with their horns blowing. Occasionally, the snarl of a motorcycle could be heard over the calypso music. A drunk lurched here and there under the watchful eyes of several policemen. Nibbs ignored all this and in his speech said, "We need to open our doors and invite meaningful private investment in our island so that we can be better able to possess that self-reliance that is contained in independence." When a development proposal is made for Barbuda, "a certain faction of Barbudans hiding behind the guise of their love for Barbuda's land undermine such development with their cowardice and suspicion claiming that 'they are going to take our land from us and take us over,' " Nibbs said, adding, "What nonsense."

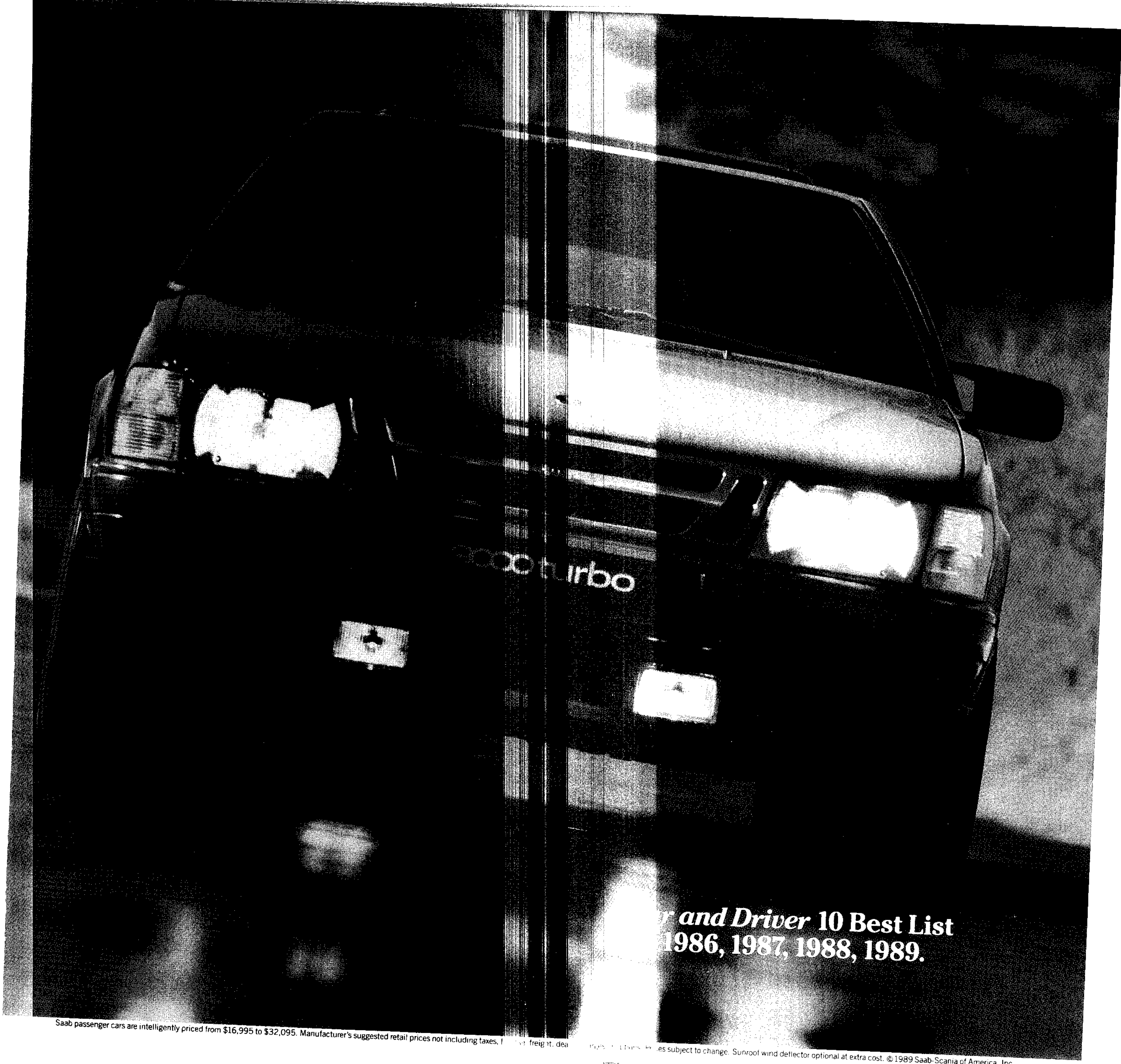
Nibbs' point of view has merit. But the faction of which he speaks also has a valid point of view, and therein lies the quandary faced not only by Barbuda but by islands throughout the Caribbean. Barbudans have only to look at Antigua to see an island whose resources are controlled in large measure by foreigners—an island held in virtual captivity by foreign banks. And Barbuda is pristine and undeveloped. But the economic needs of Barbuda make it vulnerable to exploitation from all quarters, and, in retrospect, one can see that the concerns of the Barbudans at the 1980 conference on independence in London displayed an uncanny prescience about the potential for exploitation. Berleant-Schiller says that much of what the Barbudans anticipated has come to pass, including "corrupt or questionable investors, exploitation of Barbudan resources for Antiguan ends, disregard of the Council, and diversion of revenues to Antigua."

It was, in fact, the first of these concerns, the "corrupt or questionable investors," that first took me to Antigua, in early 1982. I was a newspaper reporter, and upon learning that Robert Vesco, the famous fugitive, was living on the island, I made arrangements to fly there. Before leaving, I found that many diplomats privately refer to Antigua as "the Bird cage," and on arriving I found that not only was Vesco on the island with the knowledge of Deputy Prime Minister Lester Bird but he was suspected by the United States Embassy of being behind a shadowy organization called the Sovereign Order of New Aragon, which sought to establish a principality on Barbuda. Vesco fled Antigua when his presence there was publicized, but in March, 1984, another person who fell into the category of "corrupt or questionable investors" came to Antigua with grandiose plans for developing Barbuda. Ed Joiner, of Atlanta, founded a bank in Codrington and planned to build a railroad and to put a golf course and hotel on the Highlands. He was deported, because he was alleged to have threatened Deputy Prime Minister Bird. Since then, he has served six months in federal prison in connection with securities fraud in Georgia.

As for Berleant-Schiller's point regarding the "exploitation of Barbudan resources for Antiguan ends" and the "diversion of revenues to Antigua," sand mining is the most obvious example of such activities. Bargeloads of sand leave the island every week for other islands, where it is used in construction. The sand, dug from above the freshwater lens that serves the island, comes from the peninsular neck of Palmetto Point, the southwestern corner of the island, which has the ocean to the south and west and the lagoon to the north. "If we had a severe storm, the whole peninsula would be washed away," Frank says. "It would be a threat, a dangerous threat, to Codrington." Berleant-Schiller says that the sand mining is causing "irreparable environmental damage." And the sand mining also demonstrates the exploitative intentions of the Antiguan government in regard to Barbuda. A company controlled by Lester Bird and two other government ministers mines the sand and pays the Antiguan government about seventy-nine cents per cubic yard. The sand is sold on Antigua for $5.55 per cubic yard. The Barbuda Council filed suit on April 8, 1987, against the sand-mining company, demanding that all money coming out of the sand operation be given to the Council. Frank says that just one month's profits from the sand business could take care of two-thirds of Barbuda's annual budget. The level of services on Barbuda could be increased tenfold and "we would still have money to invest," he says. "We estimate that after five years the interest alone would cover the cost of administering the government of Barbuda." The case is still pending before the High Court of Antigua and Barbuda, and the Antiguan attorney general has recently joined the suit on the company's behalf.

In 1983, the central government created the Barbuda Industrial Development Agency and gave it powers superseding those of the Barbuda Council. Hakim Akbar, a close friend and aide-de-camp of Lester Bird, was appointed chairman. The Barbudan representatives who were appointed to the agency were those who espouse coöperation with the Antiguan government and favor development of Barbuda. Thus, while the Antiguan government can point to the Barbuda Council and describe it as an example of that island's autonomous government, in truth the Council is virtually impotent on the issues most important to the people of Barbuda. The projects approved by the Antiguans but opposed by the Barbudans have included using the island as a dumping ground for sludge from the United States and for toxic wastes.

"If you went to the government of



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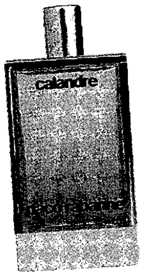
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Antigua and said you wanted them to lease the Highlands, they would," Frank told me. "They may send you to see if we agree, but it doesn't matter if we agree or not. We are not consulted on the terms and conditions being granted to people."

In March, the Antiguan courts may hear another suit filed by Barbudans—a suit that should resolve once and for all the issue of landownership on the island. It seeks to establish that the long-standing practices of swidden farming and stock-grazing on open range give Barbudans the rights in common to landownership on the island. The decision on landownership will also have considerable impact on whether or not Antigua can continue to control sand mining on the island. Barbuda is represented in the land case by John Macdonald, one of Britain's best-known constitutional lawyers.

I talked to Macdonald in his London offices one cold, rainy day in the fall of 1987. Two blue chairs faced an old wooden desk, and a new word processor sat on a small table to one side. Macdonald, a tall, lean man in a three-piece blue pin-striped suit, clasped his slender hands and looked out the window as we talked. "Barbuda was basically sold down the river by the British," he said. "The country was not given the serious consideration it should have been given." He said that the suit seeking resolution of the land issue could have been heard earlier, but "it costs money and they don't have any."

Macdonald expressed a concern that I later heard echoed by a wide variety of people on Antigua: that those who oppose the interests of the Bird government be given equal rights under Antiguan law. There is a widespread belief that when the Prime Minister's party won all sixteen seats in the House of Representatives (plus the support of Eric Burton, in the Barbuda seat) in the 1984 elections, and thus became able to conduct the affairs of government with no elected opposition, Bird began to display more than a little hubris. Macdonald even had some concern about whether he would be allowed to try the case in Antigua. He was told by the governor-general that there would not be a problem, and he was called to the bar in April of 1988. I was surprised to hear this British lawyer, speaking of a former British colony, say that if he wins the land case "the question becomes whether or not Antigua will tear up the constitution" and ignore the victory.

IT is important to remember that when one speaks of the government of Antigua one is referring not so much to an amorphous collection of elected officials as to members of the Bird family and their cronies—and, most notably, to a man who has dominated Antiguan politics for almost a half century and whose name is synonymous with Antigua. During that half century, no one has ever accused the Prime Minister of anything more serious than indulging his sons and possessing his share of arrogance. Had the Prime Minister, who is ailing, retired three or four years ago, he would have been revered as a near-saint, but now the legacy of the elderly Bird is being tainted by widespread accusations of corruption in his administration and by a growing fear that when he dies one of his sons will become Prime Minister, and a Haitian-style political dynasty will be established. Since Bird dominates a government free of the restraints of outside opposition, it is not surprising that the country, only seven years after independence, has come to face a major financial crisis. Nor is it surprising that the trickle-down effects of Antigua's problems are anything but beneficial to Barbuda.

Probity and competence are words rarely used to describe the sons of Prime Minister Bird. Antigua has become a playpen, a sandbox (full of Barbudan sand), for those men, and their toys are financial institutions, investors, and the island's infrastructure. The Prime Minister continues to dismiss all allegations against his sons as politically motivated, but the shenanigans of the younger Birds have become so flagrant that today Antigua is seen as representing the shabbiest aspect of Caribbean politics—the use of high office as merely a vehicle for increasing one's personal wealth. Vere, Jr., for example, hired a company that he secretly directed to supervise the resurfacing of Antigua's airport runway. The costs escalated wildly, and Vere, Jr.,'s company got most of the money. Lester Bird, momentarily seized by moral indignation, called for his older brother to resign. Vere, Jr., of course, refused, and said that Lester should stick to his knitting.

Lester, for his part, is a part-owner of the sand-mining venture on Barbuda and is alleged to be active in the plan to use Barbuda as a disposal site for toxic wastes. Lester received the notice of the New York *Times* in March, 1988, in a story about Bruce Rappaport, a Swiss millionaire. Lester had sold Rappaport a seventy-five-per-cent interest in a government-owned refinery in 1980. Lester also gave Rappaport a virtual monopoly on fuel-oil sales, a concession worth millions of dollars. The refinery that was sold to Rappaport never opened, promised jobs never materialized, and the whole affair has been a source of deep resentment to the union and to Labour Party members who suffered.

In 1987, Ivor Bird, a virtually unknown son, who was not in government but managed the family-owned radio station, sprang into prominence when an Antiguan opposition newspaper announced that he had leased prime beach property on Antigua to the New York businessman Tony Vimcuillo as the site for a new casino. The newspaper printed a document showing that Ivor would receive finders' fees, promoters' fees, and equity in the project worth seventeen million four hundred thousand dollars, and declared that this largesse came to Ivor solely because he was the son of the Prime Minister.

As a result of the Bird style of government, Antigua, which in 1985 was twenty-seven million eight hundred thousand dollars in arrears on its foreign debt, has lately borrowed over a hundred and eighty-two million more, much of it at commercial rates, and today the country is wrestling with an almost overwhelming debt load. Additional sources of revenue must be found, and few sources provide pickings as easy as those found on the undeveloped island of Barbuda.

IT is not hard to understand the lust in the eyes of the Antiguan government when it looks upon Bar-

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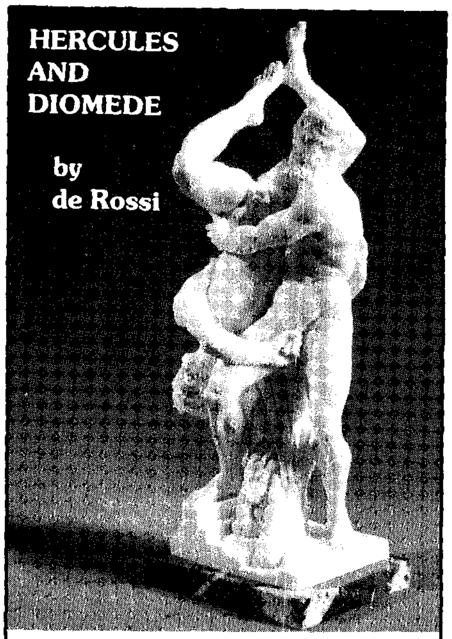
buda. Once when I happened to be walking around Codrington, I stopped in at the old police station, now called the Hall of Justice, a decrepit building that is visited every three months by a member of the judiciary, and learned that the most common offense reported to the judge is using profane language. I asked a woman resident if there had ever been a homicide on the island. "You'll have to ask someone else," she said. "I've only been here seven years, and I've never heard of any." I asked other Barbudans about rapes or robberies, and they just looked at me.

At Barbuda's hospital, an immaculate ten-bed facility on the outskirts of Codrington, I was shown around by the man who was then its administrator, a nurse named Calvin Webber, who is very proud of it. There were no patients. He told me that the most common medical problem on Barbuda is hypertension. "I would say that more than half the adults on the island have hypertension," he said, and he cited heredity and a diet of canned foods and salt fish as the reasons. There were occasional cases of hepatitis, thought to be a result of the island's shallow water table and its lack of toilets. About sixty per cent of the homes on Barbuda have no toilets and many others have only outdoor facilities.

A few days later, I chartered a small fishing boat and ventured several miles north through the lagoon, toward mangrove thickets that contain Barbuda's most famous attraction—a bird sanctuary, where hundreds of giant frigate birds were nesting. The boatman, a stocky man in his sixties named Johnny Beazer, was quite knowledgeable about the birds. When we were still several hundred yards from the sanctuary, he switched off the engine, stepped overboard, into clear, shallow water, and slowly and quietly pulled the boat forward. He pointed out the male birds—which I could easily distinguish by the bright-red inflated pouches on their throats—and then brown females and downy white chicks. The air overhead was filled with hundreds of the giant birds, wheeling and soaring in the clear skies. On either side, the mangrove trees were filled with nesting birds, so close we could almost touch them. The birds were not afraid, and we could look into their gentle eyes. Only a very few took flight as we approached. Beazer said



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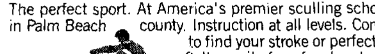

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that this was one of the most famous rookeries in the Caribbean, and that people from all over the world came here each winter to observe and take pictures. I could well believe it, for the only other well-known frigate-bird rookery is in the Galápagos Islands.

On the way back, Beazer stopped at what a map identifies as Low Bay but the Barbudans call Palm Beach—a section of beach directly across the lagoon from the pier at Codrington. It is a narrow thread of beautiful pink beach, marked by a stand of coconut palms, that stretches for several miles. We could see no buildings and no people. Slightly north of this beach, the treasure hunter Mel Fisher, who discovered the seventeenth-century Spanish galleon Atocha in the Florida Keys, has a ninety-nine-year lease on six hundred and fifty-four acres, where he plans to build what may be the most ambitious project yet to come to Barbuda. This acreage includes a triangular point that wraps around the frigate-bird sanctuary on the northwest corner of the island. A marina is planned for the section of lagoon just south of the bird sanctuary and an airport is to be constructed a few hundred yards to the south of the marina. Documents sent to potential investors show that Fisher is fronting for a real-estate project headed by the central Florida real-estate dealer Lee Tilghman, and that the plan is to establish a "rejuvenation and recuperation" program in a luxury hotel which will comprise a cosmetology center, a hyperbaric-treatment center, a biomedical clinic, and a longevity center. There is also to be a four-hundred-unit condo-hotel, a golf course, and a "preservation laboratory," where Fisher will display "anticipated treasures from shipwrecks of Spanish galleons in the area." One wonders how much he knows about the history of Barbudan salvage operations. Further plans include an underwater lounge, restaurant, and observatory, six underwater suites, diving on various wrecks, a search-and-salvage center, and an offshore bank. Guests will be invited to join Fisher in daily dives, to learn "the latest techniques for locating sunken treasure." Upon reading in the prospectus that "yachtsmen will seek safe dockage at our secluded marina," I wondered whether Fisher planned to clear the canal going into the lagoon, and how yachtsmen would come through the offshore reefs when the heavy ground swell was running.

I called Mel Fisher, who lives in Key West, to learn more about his project. He speaks very slowly, in halting phrases, is given to long pauses, and has a rather odd sense of humor. He said it was "natural" that he should go to Barbuda, because "the island is a shipwreck trap and I'm interested in shipwrecks." He went on, "It is obvious there is natural beauty there. Frigate birds. Caves. Not many people. They need help. I plan to upgrade their way of life any way they want it upgraded." He said that the government people with whom he dealt "are very good people—they speak English." Fisher told me that the first phase of his project would cost twenty-five million dollars, and that this sum would include a "gigantic water-making machine," which would bring water to the surface from an aquifer four thousand feet deep. The water would be of such purity, he said, that it could "turn the whole island into a garden" and of such abundance that "we may even pipe water to Antigua." He said he had begun diving on wrecks and had "located four shipwrecks and removed quite a few archeological items."

I showed Hilbourne Frank a copy of Fisher's plans. He was amazed. The Barbuda Council had approved none of the specifics, he said, and he had not known that land had been leased to Fisher. Nor could he understand how Fisher had managed to get salvage rights, since Barbudans had held exclusive salvage rights "since the beginning." He was also anxious to learn how Fisher would handle such extensive construction only a few miles from the fragile mangrove swamps where the frigate birds nest, and he was puzzled about the marina. As yet, it is impossible for a foreigner to hold fee-simple title to land on Barbuda; therefore, no financial institution will lend money to a foreigner to buy land there, so unless Mel Fisher can persuade investors to put up a great deal of money his project may well go the way of a great many others.

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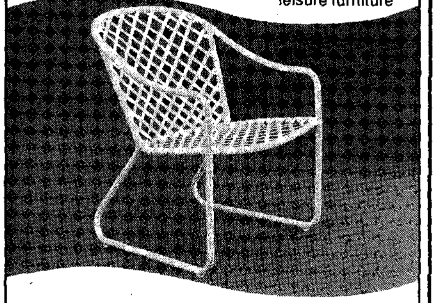
Barbuda, in addition to the exclusive Coco Point Lodge, has a small guesthouse adjacent to the airport and a small government-owned hotel south of the village. (Barbudans are not allowed in the Coco Point Lodge bar or restaurant unless they are guests of the hotel, and anyone walking along the beach in front of the Coco Point Lodge, unless he is below the high-tide line, will be asked to stay off hotel property. Kelly, the owner of the Lodge, invited me down for a drink, but when I arrived he was not there. The hotel's assistant manager imperiously clapped his hands to get my attention and demanded to know my business.)

The need for another hotel is so obvious that one might think it would be welcomed without controversy—even by Barbudans who fear that outsiders may seize control of the island. But another project, this one far less ambitious than the Mel Fisher development, is under way on the south end of the island, and it has become ensnared in small-island politics. The K Club is a ten-million-dollar development, backed by Aldo Pinto, an Italian businessman, and his wife, Mariuccia Mandelli, a designer whose clothes are marketed under the Krizia label. It will run from Coco Point's airstrip northwest for about two miles and will include bungalows, a clubhouse, and facilities for tennis, golf, and sea sports, and is scheduled to open at the end of this year. Pinto, whom I reached by telephone in Milan, said that the K Club would be a luxury development with a daily all-inclusive tariff of as much as fifteen hundred dollars for two people—twice as expensive as Coco Point Lodge. He said that the club would be "far more sophisticated" than Coco Point Lodge, which he described as "dated."

The K Club may be the only hotel in the Caribbean to be built out of



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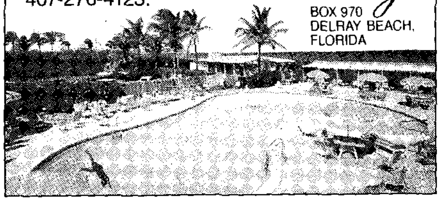

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pique. It seems that several years ago when Pinto and several of his friends were guests at Coco Point Lodge there was some sort of contretemps with management. Kelly will say only that there was an argument between the manager of the hotel and Pinto. Pinto says, "Kelly thinks he is very important. But he is not."

Pinto says he will be hiring a local staff of about seventy, but it is not clear where he will get seventy Barbudans, unless he raids the Coco Point Lodge staff. Barbuda simply does not have that many people available to be hired. And any plan to import labor, which would almost certainly be Antiguan, will not be tolerated by Barbudans.

I asked Pinto the same question I had asked Fisher, about which government officials he had dealt with regarding his project. He said he had talked to a few people on Barbuda, but "Antiguans have the final word."

Within the next few weeks, an election will be held on Antigua and Bird's party is expected to win most of the seats. Robert DuBose, who served until recently as the American chargé d'affaires in Antigua, told me that he doubts that the election will change anything. The fighting among the Birds continues to be so intense that the country's most serious problem, refinancing its external debt, has yet to be addressed. Lester Bird is promoting the idea of Antigua's becoming a republic, with his father elevated to the position of President. Lester would become Prime Minister. DuBose told me that shortly before his departure, in June, a delegation led by Hilbourne Frank had been over to talk to him about assisting Barbuda to declare its independence and become a United Nations Trust Territory. DuBose told the delegation that he could not deal with factions inside a government. The next thing he heard, some members of the delegation were in Washington lobbying congressmen. DuBose was as perplexed as many others who have dealt with Barbudans over the years have been, and I think I sensed a bit of admiration in his voice when he said, "They just don't give up."

ONE day during my stay in Barbuda, I went fishing with Vernon Joseph, the acknowledged king of Barbuda's lobster divers, who has a little-boy smile that belies his nickname, Devil. Until one notices that he has lines around his eyes, one would think him a man in his twenties. Actually, he is a middle-aged man, who enjoys the dual distinction of owning one of the lushest and most varied gardens on Barbuda and being one of the island's most aggressive dominoes players. Joseph, like most of the divers, is fond of having a drink now and then, and he is fond of rum, but he will not touch Cavalier Rum, because it is made on Antigua. It was late in the morning when Joseph arrived in an old Army truck at the small hotel south of Codrington to pick me up. In the back of the truck were a half-dozen other divers, all of them headed for the anchorage on the east side of Cocoa Point. Joseph drove at breakneck speed, causing my efforts at talk to result in a combination of grunts and teeth clickings. He looked at me, grinned, and said it was best to drive fast, because "you don't feel the bumps that way."

I counted sixteen boats moored in the shallow water off the beach. Each is moored in the same place every night, according to a protocol known only to the divers. Joseph's boat, which was the closest to a small pier, was a twenty-one-foot fibreglass boat made in Antigua from molds developed in Trinidad. He called it a pirogue. It was an open workboat with three seats of two-by-eight planks, and a small cuddy cabin where he stored his swim fins and mask. Four scuba tanks lay on the cockpit sole and were tied to the seats with black nylon line to prevent them from sliding toward the stern when the boat was travelling at high speed. Like all the other small boats moored there, Joseph's was powered by a forty-horsepower Yamaha outboard, which was the engine of choice for Barbudan divers, and was something of a status symbol on the island. Few fishermen besides the lobster divers could afford engines. The gas tank was in the center of the boat, and was also tied to a seat with a bit of line. Joseph's spear gun and a half-dozen homemade wire nooses—they are called lassos and are used for snaring lobsters—were under the stern seat.

On the beach, more than a dozen divers were coiling lines, filling gas tanks, adjusting spear guns, and securing scuba tanks in their boats. They spoke softly, and their ages could be read in their faces far more clearly than in their bodies. The men were deferential toward Joseph.

We were the first to leave the beach, and I soon found that Joseph's boat, like his truck, had but one speed. As we sliced around the edge of Gravenor Bay toward Spanish Point, I noticed that seabirds were apparently standing on the water. Then, as we began to move offshore to clear the point, I realized that the birds were standing on barely exposed coral heads; the entrance to the bay was marked by dozens, or perhaps hundreds, of coral heads, many of which were exposed only in the trough of the waves. Joseph seemed to pay them no heed as he roared through. Then we rounded the point and were in the open Atlantic, running into a marked ground swell. In less than a minute, we were both soaking wet, but the temperature was in the high eighties and the sun was white-hot against a cerulean sky.

When we were about a mile north of Spanish Point, Joseph stopped, rinsed out his swim mask, and put it on. He clicked the engine into forward gear but did not turn the throttle. The idling of the engine was enough to push the boat forward as Joseph leaned overboard, face in the water, and steered with his foot on the throttle while he searched for a suitable reef. After a moment, he came up, snorted, took a deep breath, and said, "Very clear." Joseph is a man of few words. The ground swell was far more pronounced now that we were almost dead in the water.

"Big ground swell," I ventured.

"Small one," Joseph said.

He found the reef he wanted and tossed out a small anchor. Then he put on a rubber glove to protect his right hand from lobster spines, slipped on his scuba tank and fins, straightened out the nooses of his lassos, and tossed his lobster pot overboard. It was secured to the boat with about five feet of line, so that when Joseph caught a lobster he could put it in the pot without having to surface. He pulled his mask over his face, put the regulator in his mouth, pushed the valve once, and, when a whoosh of air told him it was operating properly, took the mouthpiece between his teeth. Then he flipped backward into the water. After the bubbles subsided, I could see him clearly, the silver tank gleaming against a red shirt and red bathing trunks. I watched him as he made a wide half-circle—it took perhaps five minutes—and returned to

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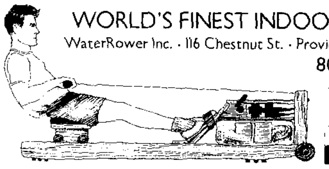
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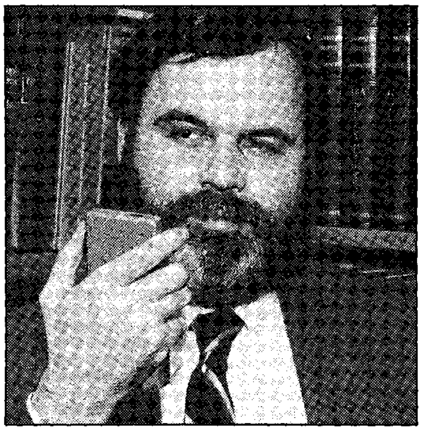

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the boat, where he carefully removed three lobsters from the lassos and put them in the pot. In less than a half-hour, he captured seventeen lobsters, including some of the largest I've ever seen. They must have weighed at least five pounds. We pulled the lobster pot on board and covered it with wet gunnysacks to protect the lobsters from the sun. (About once a week, buyers from other islands buy Joseph's entire lobster catch.)

Joseph moved up the coast a half mile, to a place where the bottom was thick with conchs. He did not use his scuba tank but simply fell over the side and dived to the bottom, allowing his boat to drift about in the coral-head-studded waters. I sat in the boat looking at the dangerous coral heads. Occasionally, Joseph would broach by the stern and his hand would snake over the gunwale and drop several gigantic conchs into the boat. The backs of the shells were covered with a pale-brown stubble, which had helped hide them on the sand. The throats of the shells were a brilliant pink. In a few minutes, there were nine conchs in the bottom of the boat. Joseph came aboard, picked up the first conch, and, with an axe, chopped a small hole in the neck. He poked a knife inside, twisted it, then shook the shell and smiled as the thick gelatinous body of the conch slipped onto the sole. He tossed the meat in the corner under the stern seat and pitched the empty shell overboard. When he had extracted all the conchs, he wiped the knife on a cloth, grinned, and said, "Me eat good tonight." That night, he would invite a group of friends over to share the feast.

Next, Joseph checked several fish pots around the reefs north of Spanish Point. They were not marked by floats, because of Antiguan poachers, but he unerringly stopped his boat within several yards of each pot—a stout wooden frame covered with heavy-gauge chicken wire. After he had pulled three pots—an onerous job—the bottom of the boat was filled with about sixty pounds of flapping fish, mostly blue and black doctor fish, parrotfish, and grunts. These would be sold in the village.

Then Joseph headed toward the beach, about two miles away. The island was low in the water, and I could understand how mariners were upon it before they could see it. Anyone who has sailed a small sailboat offshore knows the horror of having to cope with reefs on a lee shore. I was more than uneasy as Joseph zoomed through the coral heads, clearing some of them by mere inches as we pressed deeper and deeper into the reef. As we rounded a sharp corner and found ourselves in a cul-de-sac, Joseph chopped the power, and we drifted to a stop, amid coral heads in every direction except along the narrow channel we had entered by. Joseph tossed the lobster pot overboard. It was easily seen in the clear water, but it would be safe from poachers. No Antiguan could come through the reef.

—Robert Coram

• •

SALTING THE OATMEAL

She never used a measuring spoon.
  She poured salt in her palm
    and flung it in the oatmeal.
Some days it rained all day.
  Some winters it never snowed.
    Her second marriage might have worked.
What if she'd used a measuring spoon?
  The bombers flew over every night
    but she never had to be dug out.
Sometimes she reached for the saltcellar.
  When we were in Austria,
    Hans cadged petrol and passports
      from three countries. . . .
        We had to leave Herr Mohl behind.
          And my mauve accordion. . . .
When things were too salty
  she drank a glass of water
    or most anything.

—Eleanor Ross Taylor

THE CURRENT CINEMA

Stunt

“RAIN MAN” is Dustin Hoffman humping one note on a piano for two hours and eleven minutes. It’s his dream role. As the autistic savant Raymond Babbitt, he’s impenetrable: he doesn’t make eye contact or touch anyone or carry on a conversation; he doesn’t care what anybody thinks of him. Autistic means self-involved, and Raymond is withdrawn in his world of obsessive rituals. So Hoffman doesn’t have to play off anybody; he gets to act all by himself. He can work on his trudging, mechanical walk and the tilt of his head and the irascible, nagging sameness of his inflections. Autistics aren’t known to be jerky like this (they’re more likely to move slowly and fluidly), but Hoffman’s performance has an intricate consistency. Even his tight voice fits his conception.

In dramatic terms, what distinguishes autism from other behavioral syndromes is that you don’t get a direct emotional response from an autistic person. Even after Raymond is kidnapped by his younger brother, the slimeball Charlie (Tom Cruise), who hopes to get hold of some of the three million dollars their father has left in trust for Raymond’s care, Raymond shows no awareness of what’s happening to him. Yet because of the way the director, Barry Levinson, sets up the situations there’s nothing for you to do except watch Hoffman intently, microscopically, searching for clues to Raymond’s feelings. And you may begin to think that you’re reading him, that Levinson is bootlegging you teeny glimmers. What you definitely get is the zigzags of Raymond’s head that suggest panic at the violation of his daily routines. And now and then he lets out a primal bleat or squawk that alerts you to his terror of a new situation.

The heads of autistics seem to be wired in a closed-off way, as if their brains were divided into little boxes—little worlds unto themselves. And this is especially puzzling in the small percentage who, like Raymond, have surreal talents; he’s a wizard—a sci-fi computer mutant—at some mathematical-memory functions. Hoffman gets to play it all: a disconnected, pesky child with inexplicable powers. For close to an hour, it’s an entertaining comic turn. Intuitively, Hoffman seems to understand that we’d enjoy identifying with Raymond’s obstinacy—it’s his way to win out over his crummy brother—and when the audience laughs at Raymond the laughs are always friendly. He’s accepted as a harmless, endearing alien—E.T. in autistic drag. But then the performance has nowhere to go. It becomes a repetitive, boring feat, though the boringness can be construed as fidelity to the role (and masochists can regard it as great acting). Slightly stupefied as I left the theatre, I wondered for a second or two why the movie people didn’t just have an autistic person play the part. (In the seventies, when Robert Wilson staged his “A Letter for Queen Victoria,” he used an actual autistic teen-ager in the show, with babbling, trance-inducing music that seemed to evoke the fixations of an autistic child.) But with an actual autistic there would be no movie: this whole picture is Hoffman’s stunt. It’s an acting exercise—working out minuscule variations on his one note. It’s no more than an exercise, because Hoffman doesn’t challenge us: we’re given no reason to change our attitude toward Raymond; we have the same view of him from the beginning of the movie to the end.

Hoffman’s crabbed intensity worked marvellously when he played the paranoiac paroled robber in “Straight Time,” and it worked as nippy self-satire when he played the perfectionist actor in “Tootsie.” But it doesn’t feel right here. This is the fanatic, uncompromising actor in “Tootsie” playing an autistic the way he played a tomato. (In his mind’s eye he’s always watching the audience watch him.) It’s a determinedly external, locked-in performance (and Levinson makes no attempt, like Wilson’s, to take us inside the character by Expressionist means). We’re on the outside staring at this virtuoso apparatus. Hoffman doesn’t allow Raymond a minute of simple relaxed sluggishness; he keeps you conscious of the buzzing of anxiety in Raymond’s brain. He keeps his actor’s engine chugging and upstages the movie.

The kidnap plot is no more than a barefaced contrivance to get the two brothers on the road together. “Rain Man” has to get outdoors, or it’s just a TV sickness-of-the-week movie; it cinematizes a TV theme by moving the brothers from place to place. Their father has left Charlie a 1949 Buick Roadmaster

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convertible, and they travel in it, with many a stop, from Cincinnati to L.A. In the first days, the materialistic Charlie is tantrummy and almost insanely callous; he shouts crude insults at Raymond. Obviously, these scenes are intended to show how self-centered Charlie is, and how far he has to go to become a sensitive, loving person; he's meant to be spiritually autistic. But, oddly, Charlie's jeering at Raymond doesn't cause you pain. Levinson's directing is too flaccid for you to feel the scenes sharply; there's no conviction in them. (This makes the movie easy to swallow, on a TV level.) And Cruise as a slimeball is just a sugarpuss in Italian tailoring. He doesn't even use his body in an expressive way. His performance here consists of not smiling too much—so as not to distract his fans from watching Hoffman. (This could be called "restraint.") Cruise is an actor in the same sense that Robert Taylor was an actor. He's patented: his knowing that a camera is on him produces nothing but fraudulence.

Charlie has felt sorry for himself for years. That's been his justification for his cheap huckstering; he runs a shady business in L.A., selling imported sports cars that don't quite meet American regulations. But during the trip—Charlie's voyage of self-discovery—he has no one to hustle, and (according to plot calculation) is forced back on himself. Levinson lays it out for the audience on a platter: Charlie has the capacity to change. In due course, after he vents his exasperation at Raymond's inflexibility, he begins to understand himself better and he learns to care about Raymond. And when the two brothers touch heads it's clear that the time they've spent together has affected them both. They've regained the bond they had when Charlie was a baby and Raymond sang to him. This heads-together image has its poetry. It also sums up the film's anti-sentimental sentimental bilge.

"Rain Man" is getting credit for treating autism "authentically," because Raymond isn't cured; in a simple transposition, it's Charlie who's cured. Actually, autism here is a dramatic gimmick that gives an offbeat tone to a conventional buddy movie. ("Rain Man" has parallels to several scenes in "Midnight Run" and "Twins," but the standard buddy-movie tricks are so subdued that they may squeak by as "life.") The press has been full of accounts of the research into autism done by Hoffman and Levinson and the principal scriptwriter, Ronald Bass, but what's the use of all this research if then they rig the story and throw in a big sequence with Raymond using his whiz-bang memory to make a killing in Las Vegas that takes care of Charlie's money troubles? And what's the point of setting up Raymond's avoidance of being touched if Charlie is going to hold him while showing him how to dance and Charlie's warmhearted Italian girlfriend (Valeria Golino) is going to teach him how to kiss? (Is that something Raymond is likely to be called on to do?) Everything in this movie is fudged ever so humanistically, in a perfunctory, low-pressure way. And the picture has its effectiveness: people are crying at it. Of course they're crying at it—it's a piece of wet kitsch.

Levinson—it's his temperament—stretches out the scenes until they yawn. You may sit there thinking "And more?" "And again?" and "We've already been here!" This is the kind of moviemaking in which you've been there before you get there.

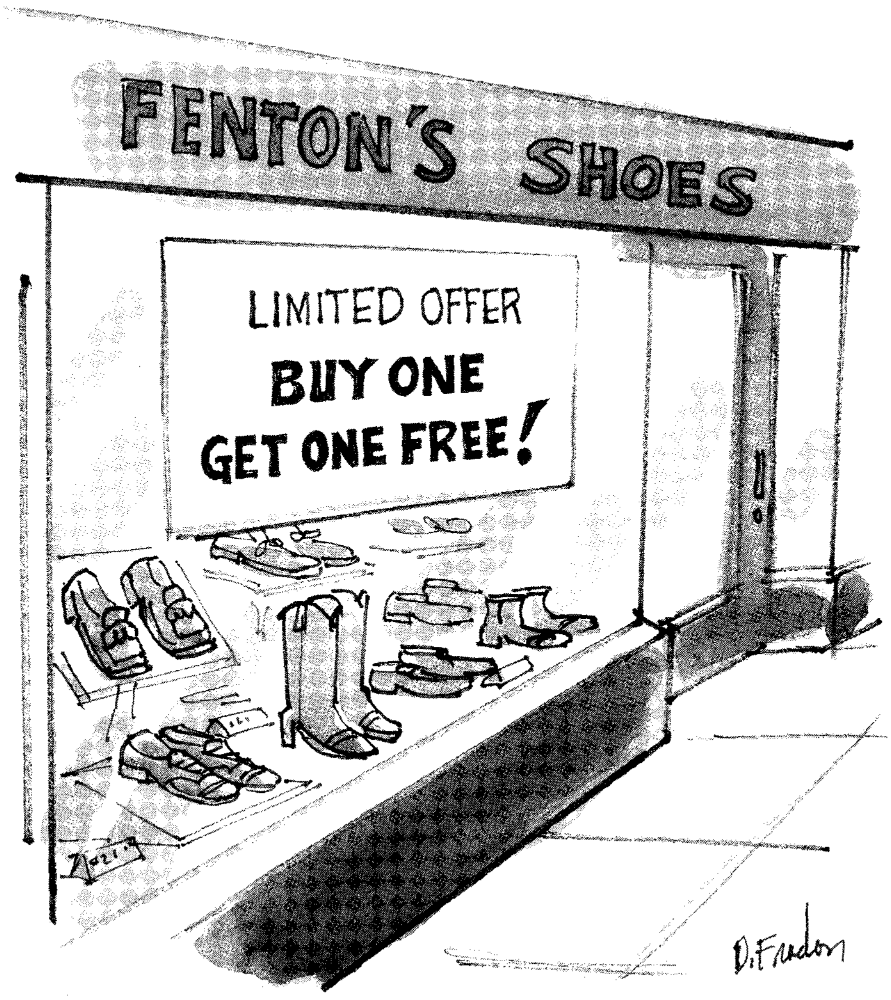
In the context of a hit like "Rain Man"—it's the top box-office film in the country—it may seem almost naïve to suggest that if Raymond is the central character, and the given of the material is that he can't express his mental state, then it's up to the moviemakers to do it. Movies have often been at their most eloquent when the writers and directors and designers and composers used the possibilities of visual and aural stylization, of imagination and fantasy, to envision how the world might be perceived by disordered psyches. (Examples: just about any film noir you can think of, the 1981 M-G-M musical "Pennies from Heaven," "Blue Velvet," "Raising Arizona," "Dreamchild," "The Stepfather," De Palma's "Carrie," the BBC miniseries "The Singing Detective.") If moviemakers don't risk shaking up audiences and making our nerves tingle, they're likely to fall back on hauling an autistic savant to Las Vegas, duding him up, and teaching him to kiss. —PAULINE KAEL

THE THEATRE

His Majesty

PIRANDELLO'S "Enrico IV," now in revival at the Roundabout, tells the story of an Italian nobleman who, twenty years before the action begins, was kicked in the head by a horse while attending a masquerade, and regained consciousness believing himself to be a medieval monarch. The play is set mostly in the main hall of his villa, now designed to look like a royal throne room, where the servants are disguised as courtiers and instructed to behave accordingly. On the wall hang two modern portraits, one of the nobleman in the costume of Henry IV of Germany and the other of his pre-kick flame, the Marchioness Matilde, also in regal disguise. The time is 1922. A group of Enrico's old associates enters, with various purposes in mind, among them presumably to help cure his madness. They include Matilde, now middle-aged and hard-bitten and sly; her cowed, pretty daughter; a scheming baron (I couldn't make out what he was scheming at); and a psychiatrist. The play itself is a matter of small scenes, and in the course of one of them Enrico reveals that his madness vanished long ago, that he is now sane (he thinks), that his own pretending is more effective than that of anyone around him, and that he has been in control the whole time. He is not entirely gleeful, for he is always aware of the time gone by and of his lost youth.

The performance, under J. Ranelli's direction, starts in confusion as we try to sort out the characters and figure out what they are doing, but it gradually clears. Perhaps by "we" I mean myself. Never having read or seen the play, a priceless advantage, I was able to relish all the moment-to-moment surprises and enjoy the bountiful wit and humor and the complexities of the plot. Madness, feigned madness, and masquerade are subjects made to order for Pirandello's sharp, teasing intellect—"illusion" and "reality" are usually on the label—and his playful, teeming invention. In Robert Cornthwaite's lucid translation, no subtlety, no joke goes to waste. As is so often true at the Roundabout, the company as a whole is not especially distinguished. Yet the actors never get in the way of the play or slow its mercurial tempo or spoil the fun, much to the credit of Mr. Ranelli. The Roundabout—this for the hundredth time—is, for all practical purposes, summer stock in New York, and its revivals can, and occasionally do, perform a useful service. In this instance, the presence of Paul Hecht is mainly responsible for making "Enrico IV" more than just useful. Mr. Hecht gives the role the strength and glittering lunacy it needs; not a flicker of thought or feeling gets past him. I also enjoyed Robert Stattel as the psychiatrist, equipped with the earnestness (and the vocabulary) of his trade. The stage psychiatrist is becoming as familiar as the stage Englishman, but Mr. Stattel is his own man. Diane Kagan is the former flame, and Karen Chapman is her daughter. Nobody else made much of an impression. The setting, by Marjorie Bradley Kellogg, is impressive indeed, as lighted by John Gleason; Andrew B. Marlay designed the good costumes. All these elements, good and so-so, aside, the play's the thing. No one on hand can upstage Luigi Pirandello. —EDITH OLIVER



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MUSICAL EVENTS

Landscapes of the Mind

LAST month, the Met presented a double bill of Bartók's "Bluebeard's Castle" and Schoenberg's "Erwartung," with Jessye Norman as the heroine of both, and Samuel Ramey as Bluebeard. The operas are heard quite often in concert form: the Philadelphia Orchestra brought a sumptuous "Bluebeard" to Carnegie Hall in 1986, with Sylvia Sass and Aage Haugland, and Charles Dutoit as conductor; in 1983, Hildegard Behrens sang "Erwartung" four times with the Philharmonic, conducted by Zubin Mehta, and in 1985 there were Carnegie performances by Phyllis Bryn-Julson, the Cincinnati Symphony, and Michael Gielen, and by Anja Silja, the Cleveland Orchestra, and Christoph von Dohnányi. But the Met had not staged "Bluebeard" for fourteen years, and this was its first "Erwartung." "Bluebeard" was composed in 1911, "Erwartung" in 1909. By year spans, neither is a "modern" opera—any more than Rossini's "William Tell" was a modern opera in 1909, or Mozart's "Lucio Silla" a modern opera in 1854, when Wagner completed "Das Rheingold." Both "Bluebeard" and "Erwartung"—like "Silla" and "Tell" and "Das Rheingold"—can speak to a modern audience. The music, rather than the text, now speaks: the Bartók is a great arch of eloquent orchestral sound, built on strong formal and harmonic foundations; the Schoenberg is an extraordinary outpouring of nervous, non-repetitive, exciting invention, written in seventeen days and employing an unprecedented, free idiom that the composer himself, when questioned by his pupil Egon Wellesz, could not explain. The librettos—Bartók's by Béla Balázs, Schoenberg's by Marie Pappenheim—can be praised for providing structural frames. "Bluebeard" is a Symbolist and "Erwartung" an Expressionist drama. In Bartók's opera, Judith, Bluebeard's latest wife, "strips" him of all his secrets by her insistence on opening the seven doors that lead from his castle hall, and when she has done so she leaves him. In Schoenberg's opera, an unnamed Woman wanders through an alarming wood—starting at shadows, blurting out her anxieties, suspicions, fears—and comes upon the still bleeding corpse of her lover. Maeterlinck's "Pelléas" appeared in 1892; Debussy's "Pelléas," composed in 1893-95, in 1902; Freud's "Studien über Hysterie" in 1895. Today, any schoolboy can offer interpretations of the symbolism. All that the operas need in the way of staging is suitably atmospheric décor and lighting, in which the few actions prescribed by their composers can be tellingly represented.

The Met production—directed by Göran Järvevelt, designed by Hans Schavernoch (set) and Lore Haas (costumes), and lit by Gil Wechsler—elected not to offer them. It was not by whim that Bartók and his librettist specified a circular, vaulted castle hall: in the spoken prologue, the Bard says, "Our eyes' curtain—the eyelashes—opens: Where is the stage, outside or inside?" The Met version of this stage within the skull has walls meeting at angles; the one at the back can swivel and pivot, like a garage door. They are veneered with panels of polished, reflective light-brown marble, suggesting a postmodern lobby. (Photographs reveal that the floor pattern also forms part of the design, but it is invisible from the orchestra.) Bartók makes the moment of Bluebeard and Judith's sudden appearance—black silhouettes against dazzling whiteness without—the first forte of his score. Bluebeard's resolute and Judith's reluctant advance into the hall—as he invites her to enter his secret life, his psyche, whatever—are then keyed to, measured by, the music. But at the Met there was no entrance: the pair were onstage from the start, posed in a tableau. In 1985, Mr. Schavernoch and Miss Haas designed a Vienna production of the double bill, which was directed by Götz Friedrich. This—to judge by a review in *Opera*—was somewhat different. In Vienna, at the opening of the door to Bluebeard's armory a "grotesque cannon" rose up; at the Met, the nose of the Concorde, in shining white, poked out. I had never—not even in the simplest presentations—seen a "Bluebeard" in which the vision revealed by each door's opening was in design and in lighting so ineffectual, so inadequate to the picturesquely and emotionally ex-

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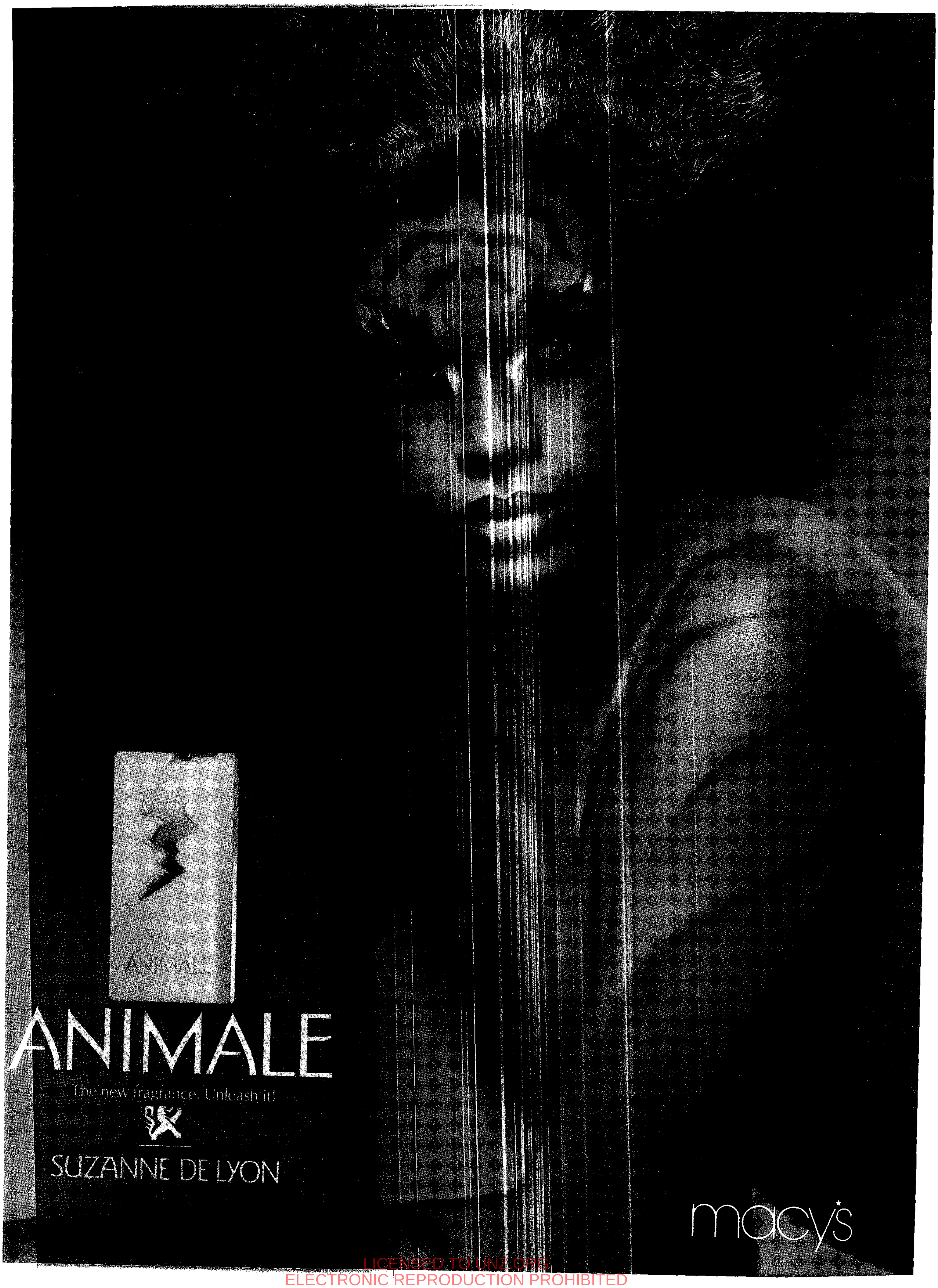
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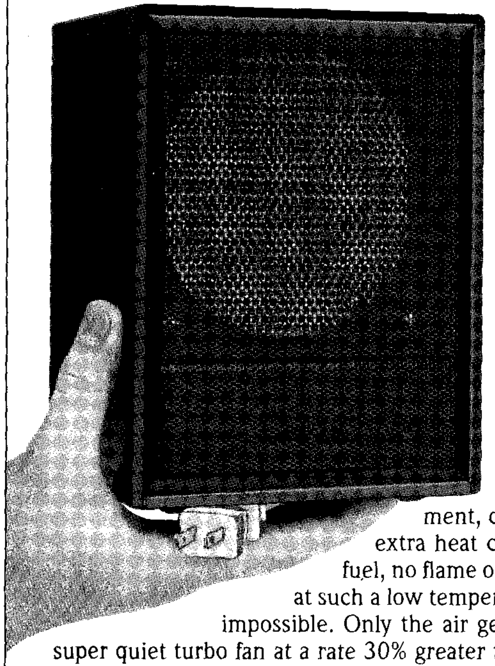

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plicit music. The ducal *Schatzkammer* was represented by a high-piled dessert trolley, pushed out from the wings. In Vienna, as each door opened, Judith shed a garment, until she was down to her shift; at the Met, Bluebeard (more appropriately, if with thumpingly obvious symbolism) did a striptease, starting with his dark glasses. As the opening of the seventh door approached, and the choice seemed to be between dropping his pants and doffing his boots, there was a surprise in store: he pulled off his curly mane of a wig, to reveal a bald pate. Bluebeard's former wives were three sinuous Rhinemaidens. They bathed in the Pool of Tears; they were clad in ankle-length hair—like Donatello's Magdalen—and high-heeled shoes.

"Erwartung" was played in the same set: as it were, Judith came back through the seventh door and paddled through the pool, to sing Schoenberg's monodrama. During the intermission, the hall had acquired some furniture—a piano, some benches—and vegetation in the form of red-leaved branches thrust through the left-hand doors. A prima donna's traditional props were set out in readiness: lighted candles that she could blow out, flowers that she could gather up and then scatter, cards that she could deal, musingly, and then let flutter to the ground. Peter Sellars, America's leading opera director, was originally engaged to stage these operas—as part of a triple bill, to be completed by Debussy's "Martyrdom of St. Sebastian." His work has been seen in Boston, Purchase, Chicago, Brooklyn, Houston, Britain, Europe, but not yet in Manhattan. His "Bluebeard" and "Erwartung" would surely have been something keen, intelligent, and exciting: a proud feather erect in the Met's wilting cap. Miss Norman needs someone like Mr. Sellars to give focus to her abundant natural gifts. She is prodigious, generous, potentially a huge stage presence. She was smashing in Dido's death scene, in Berlioz's "Les Troyens," enacting it with a kind of voodoo ferocity. But her big natural instincts did not lead her to convincing portrayals of Bartók's Judith and Schoenberg's Woman: to express emotion—any emotion—she opened her mouth and pulled a face. Mr. Ramey is another artist gifted by nature with a splendid voice who comes to life onstage only under the prick of inspired direction. His Figaro, Glyndebourne-inspired, and Strehler-inspired, has vivacity, and his Mephistopheles in Boito's opera, I'm told, has now been vivified by Robert Carsen's Geneva production. Beside Miss Norman's majestic presence he cut a somewhat insignificant figure, but that was inevitable; Miss Norman cannot help seeming a Judith able to eat Bluebeards for breakfast. The thought of Miss Norman, Mr. Ramey, and Mr. Sellars conspiring in "Bluebeard" and of Miss Norman and Mr. Sellars conspiring in "Erwartung" was intoxicating. Their union should have produced performances, possibly controversial, that one would remember all one's days. But, alas, Mr. Sellars and the Met parted company. Manhattan remains Sellarless. Mr. Järvefelt was invited to make his Met début. A Met handout described him as one who "has directed over seventy new productions throughout the world," seven of them in Santa Fe. I have seen several and have found them, for the most part, without much distinction.

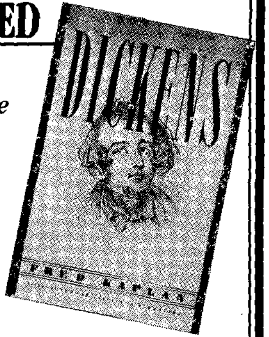
I am not deploring the nonadherence to the strict letter of the stage directions, though I sympathize with those who would do so, in the light of composers' concern that musical actions and stage actions should be congruent. In "Simon Boccanegra" Verdi wrote measures that he felt would be "ruined," and even "a disaster," if the staging did not exactly follow his prescriptions. Schoenberg scorned "the directors who look at a work only in order to make it into *something quite different*." That was in a letter to a Berlin Intendant, about a forthcoming production of "Erwartung." It continues, "While I was composing, I had all the scenic effects in mind, seeing them with the utmost precision. . . . It is essential for the Woman to be seen always *in the forest*, so that people realize that she is *afraid of it!!* For the whole drama *can* be understood as a nightmare. But for that very reason it must be a *real* forest and not merely a 'conventional' one." Schoenberg's own scenic designs for the opera are reproduced in the February *Keynote*. Landscapes of the mind are terrains more familiar today than they were in 1909 and 1911, and a director who, along with his designer and lighter, seeks to take into account what has been dreamed since can be commended. But not a director whose imagery conventionalizes, blunts, diminishes the works.

If one had shut one's eyes and just listened, what would the result have been? I didn't shut my eyes and can only speculate. "Bluebeard" was done in English and "Erwartung" in German: I would have heard Mr. Ramey's words, since he sings legato, but few of Miss Norman's words, since she sings note by note rather than in phrases. She has a big, rich voice, good to hear. Mr. Ramey also has a big, rich voice, good to hear. James Levine, as ever, drew high-quality playing from his splendid orchestra. But he did not heed the fourth and the sixth of Richard Strauss's Ten Golden Rules:

> 4. Never look encouragingly at the brass, unless it be with a brief glance to insure a heavy attack.
>
> 6. If you think that the brass is not blowing loudly enough, damp it down two degrees more.

In other words, the performances, for all the gleaming orchestral sound, were sometimes ponderous and noisy. "Bluebeard" ran well over the hour that has enabled it to fit onto many LP single-disk recordings. Mr. Levine revelled in the moments, made much of them, but did not carry impetus through the long spans. This was a disappointing show. Even though things are likely to improve musically, the inscenation is probably beyond rescue.

OPERAS based on plays by Eugene O'Neill are not uncommon. The Met mounted Louis Gruenberg's "The Emperor Jones" in 1933 and Marvin David Levy's "Mourning Becomes Electra" in 1967 (since when it has done no new opera). The City Opera mounted Thomas Pasatieri's "Before Breakfast" in 1980. Beatrice Laufer's "Ile" has had several productions, the latest at an O'Neill festival in



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China. The Central Opera Service annals hold more titles, including two versions of "The Rope"—by Louis Mennini (Tanglewood, 1955) and by Bernard Videau (Tours, 1979). And there have been at least two musicals: Bob Merrill's "New Girl in Town" (after "Anna Christie") and his "Take Me Along" (after "Ah, Wilderness!"). The latest O'Neill opera is Edward Thomas's "Desire Under the Elms," with a libretto by Joe Masteroff, which had its full première at City Center last month, presented by the New York Opera Repertory Theatre. Judy Kaye sang Abbie, and James Schwisow sang Eben. The piece has been in the works since 1972, and over the last decade has had a slew of "workshop" tryouts, under the auspices of the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, the Central City Festival, the National Music Theatre Network, and other organizations. It seems puzzling that anyone, from the first workshop onward, should have thought the opera had a future, and puzzling that the New York State Council on the Arts, along with individuals and eminent foundations (disposing of public money to the extent that tax deductions apply), should have rallied to underwrite a New York production. From the program note we learned that Thomas, who is unknown to American Grove, comes from Minnesota, that he began composing about twenty years ago, that a string quartet was played in New York in 1967 and a clarinet concerto in 1970, and that both pieces have been recorded on Musical Heritage. "Desire Under the Elms" presented a composer who is rooted in diatonic conventionality and is melodically, harmonically, and orchestrally feeble. Did no one suggest to him, at any of the workshops, that it is ineffective to end almost every phrase —whatever the syllable concerned— with a sustained note? The piece merits no extended discussion. But it is a matter for concern that when much admirable new composition in this city is jeopardized by underfunded, underrehearsed execution this opera should have been awarded three well-prepared performances in one of New York's best opera houses.

City Center, as renovated in 1982 and 1986, is certainly that. I don't remember its being quite as good in the old days, when, on my first visit to New York, I heard Phyllis Curtin sing Salome and a young Shirley Verrett sing Carmen, with Richard Cassilly as Don José. In 1982, the auditorium was refashioned: at the sacrifice of a hundred seats, the notorious "dip" in the orchestra was filled in, some rows deep under the balcony overhang were removed, and the back wall was brought forward. In 1986, a side stage was added, and the upper foyer was restored to Mauresque splendor. The redone City Center is used mainly for dance; I had not realized how satisfactory it could be for opera until, at "Desire Under the Elms," I sat toward the back of the orchestra, well beneath the overhang, and heard not just clearly but also "closely." Not all the voices were strong, but none of them had to force. Although the place holds only six fewer people than the huge State Theatre, it seems more intimate. Town Hall, although it holds four hundred more people than Tully Hall, seems more intimate. Perhaps a reason for that is that both City Center and Town Hall were built initially for speech (City Center as meeting place for the Shriners, Town Hall for lectures of the League for Political Education).

Favorable impressions of City Center were confirmed when, a few days later, the New Sadler's Opera arrived to play a short run of "H.M.S. Pinafore," and speech and song—blessedly unamplified, blessedly unforced—were both excellently audible. I thought it a rather trite, coarse production (by Christopher Renshaw), in rather trite, coarse scenery (by Tim Goodchild), but the performance was spirited and precise, and there was a cast of "real" singers—most of them well-known British Mozartians. Gordon Sandison (Captain Corcoran), Hugh Hetherington (Ralph Rackstraw), and Steven Page (Bill Bobstay) were outstanding. "H.M.S. Pinafore" (of which there were once, in New York alone, eight simultaneous productions) may not be the very best G. & S., but it has a captivating score. David White conducted it, and a pickup band of New York's expert free-lancers played it, with uncommon grace and charm. —ANDREW PORTER

•

31 DARK SHADOWS Carolyn's body turns up missing.—*TV listing in the Woodbridge (N.J.) News Tribune.*

Who says there are no new plots?

BOOKS

Poor Little Lambs

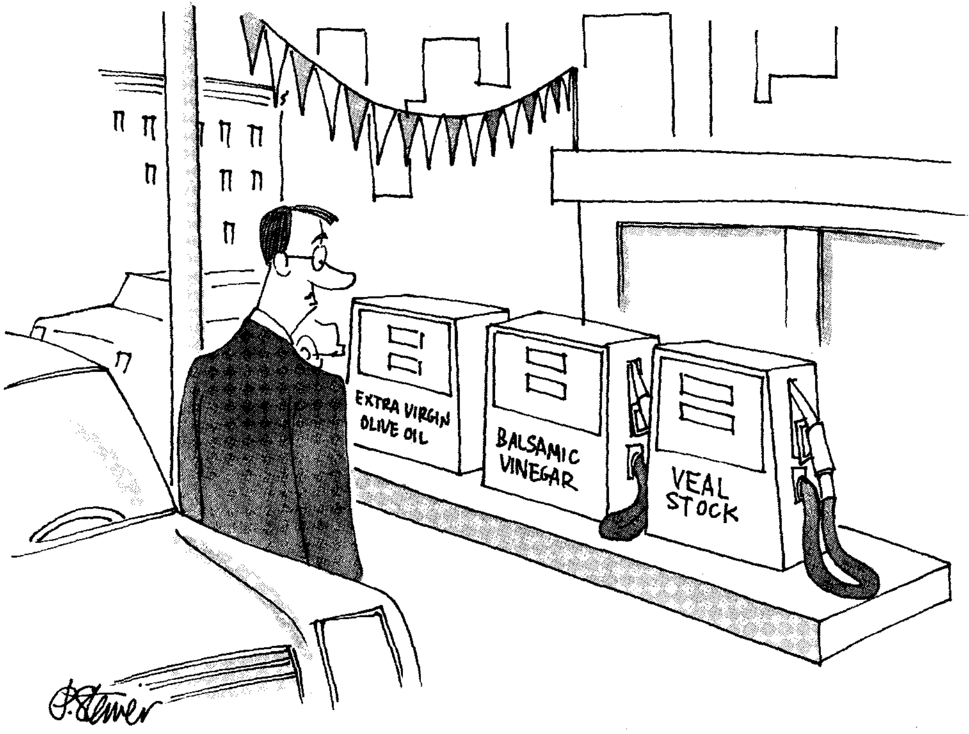
Walter Benjamin, whose life knew too much grief, would rejoice. He pleaded for a revaluation of what we call history—for a vision and for a method of recorded remembrance which would include not only the victors, the charismatic, and the accomplished but also, and most emphatically, the defeated, the humbled, the powerless. For it is their scarred, anonymous existence that makes up the fabric and matter of the actual human condition. Himself so profoundly a victim of ideological and totalitarian persecution, though one of clairvoyant genius, Benjamin spoke out for a recuperation by and into history of the voiceless—of women, and of the lamed and the destitute. He himself initiated a new perception of the history of childhood.

Today, Benjamin's plea and proposals are being richly realized. The feminist movements have been at one in their determination to restore to women their presence—their articulate witness—in history, be it political, economic, or social. Though still in its pioneering stages, the study of childhood in successive epochs and cultures—the historical-cultural demarcation of the child as a persona in his own right—is producing fascinating material. We have histories of servants. As far as it can be recaptured, the tongue-tied testimony of the urban and rural poor, of the disenfranchised, of the slave and the indentured is now being heard. It is as if the immense shadow chorus of the silenced, of the trodden and the offended (as Dostoyevski termed them), were at last crowding to stage front. Why, asked Brecht, do we know of the monarchs mummified inside the pyramids but know nothing of the men who actually built these monstrous props of eternity? That haughty ignorance is ebbing.

Professor John Boswell, of Yale, has a nose for the unwonted and the marginal. His study of early and medieval Christian attitudes toward homosexuality won the American Book Award in 1981. Now, with "The Kindness of Strangers" (Pantheon; $24.95), he has turned to an even more recondite zone of pathos—the abandonment of children in Western Europe from late antiquity to the waning of the Middle Ages. The title itself embodies a complex play on words and values. "Kindness," as Shakespeare teaches us in "King Lear," signifies both parentage or kinship, on the one hand, and solace or benevolent conduct, on the other. Throughout history, men and women have known how to be less than kind to their own kind. Add to this the full resonance of the German *Kind*, meaning "child," and you have the manifold texture of Boswell's concerns. The "stranger" may well turn out to be not only of our "kind" in a generic sense. He may in appalling fact be our child (*Kind*). When we use him for sexual purposes—and children have been so used through all history and all societies—we may be committing incest. That possibility literally haunted Kierkegaard and gave Pirandello the germ of his most famous play. Both these instances fall outside Professor Boswell's notice, but the potential for the incestuous is constantly invoked in this study, and is shown to have underwritten what religious and moral objections there were to abandoning one's children.

Such abandonment was perennial throughout the Western world from Hellenistic antiquity to the end of the thirteenth century. Interweaving three principal strands of evidence—historical documentation (very scarce), mythological-literary texts, and what modern demographers have been able to tell us about population levels—Boswell suggests that the rates of child abandonment were highest from the twilight of the Roman Empire (circa 250 A.D.) to the eleventh century. They seem to have shrunk during the relative prosperity and stability of the two hundred years that followed. Roughly around the year 1200, abandonment again rose. Its recession at any given period, moreover, must be understood as geographically localized. Marginal communities in Iceland, in Ireland, in Scandinavia appear to have had a constant high rate of child exposure (this is to say, children left to die in the open air or in out-of-the-way spots), relegation, sale, or outright abandonment.

Despite major changes in culture and in sensibility, the motives remained very largely the same. The poor are indeed always with us. Faced with starvation, with lack of domestic space, the naked and the hungry abandon many of their too numerous offspring lest all perish. Abandonment surges in times (so frequent) of war, of social tumult,



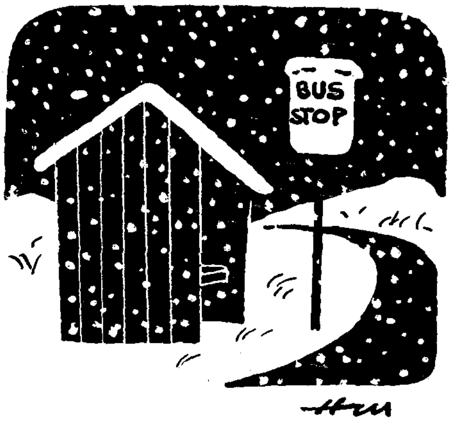
of the displacement of the vanquished or the enslaved. Pandemic disease plays a sinister part. (The Black Death was instrumental in heightening the rate of child abandonment.) What one might call "Spartan" or "platonic" grounds for abandonment—a belief in the unreality of fatherhood or in the ideal of communal, anonymous child rearing—are rare; Rousseau's calmly brazen abandonment of his five offspring is celebrated for its avowed singularity. Ubiquitous, on the other hand, is the abandonment of the sickly or handicapped infant, and of the infant who is or is thought to be the product of an illegitimate or incestuous union.

If Professor Boswell is right—and his excavations of statistical proof are as delicate, as conjectural as any in archeology—the great majority of the abandoned survived. They did so either as adopted members of more fortunate households (innumerable myths and fairy tales of the foundling, and of the foundling's restoration to a lost identity, turn on this condition) or as laborers, servants, slaves of one category or another. The latter alternative is graphic still in the world of Blake's child chimney sweeps and of the thieving gangs in Dickens' "Oliver Twist." Children sold, given away, left on temple steps or church porches (the venue in London today is the lit telephone booth) most probably died at a rate only slightly above that of normal infant mortality. Though Boswell does not put it in exactly these terms, one derives the strong impression that in antiquity and in much of Western history child abandonment, together with that "kindness of strangers" which led to a large measure of survival, was an economic mechanism—a means of recycling human labor and demographic potential that would otherwise have been fatally lost. Where human limbs were the foremost source of productive force—in agriculture, in industry, in domestic and public labor—the rescued and reared child was the very matrix of social expansion. He would, in turn, know parentage and, very possibly, emancipation. Long before Lévi-Strauss, men had intuited that kinship patterns, words, and money are analogous counters of circulation and recycling.

TWO shockers emerge, and are meant to emerge, from this mosaic of arcane scholarship. Boswell argues that his long inventory of abandonment in no way implies a lack of parental sentiment in either antiquity or the Middle Ages. Biologically, the existence of the human species on the planet is such that millennia are the blink of an eye; it would be absurd to suppose that love of one's offspring was a recent evolutionary development. Our instincts have been constants. Those who exposed, sold, remitted their sons and daughters (the latter more often than the former) in ancient Corinth or Alexandria, in medieval London or Rome, were no monsters of indifference. They believed that they were acting not only in the best interests of their own material survival but in the best interests of the child. Good fortune or, at the least, a normal life span might ensue where the sole alternative was death. In the "great stillness" (Professor Boswell's eloquent phrase) that cloaks so much of the historical evidence, there are flashes of bitter light. Fables and myths tell of mothers rescuing their children from exposure, from the committal to mortal hazard (the archetypal theme of the baby put in a basket and set afloat on river or sea), or from public sale. Legends—they spellbound the later Shakespeare—tell of tortuous, yearlong quests for the child once abandoned but never forgotten. An Oedipus, on whom the oracle and his father have passed sentence of immediate death, is smuggled toward survival. But the notion that the abandonment of one's child constitutes some sort of generic inhumanity or a breach of some essential ethical contract surfaces very rarely, if at all.

"At no point did European society as a whole entertain serious sanctions against the practice." This is Boswell's second land mine. Ethical systems either licensed or ignored it. Boswell's argument dwells with some relish on the Jewish case. It has long been very nearly an axiom that Judaism, in respect of both religion and familial practice, believed in the sanctity of the child. But Boswell, citing Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac and the injunctions in Exodus whereby the eldest son of a Jew belongs to God, finds "a striking and fundamental parallel to the use of children as sacrificial offerings in other cultures." Next, he cites, violently out of context, Leviticus 26:29, where, in an overwhelming prevision of divine anger at the recalcitrance of his chosen people, God tells of the destruction to be visited upon Israel, of miseries so appalling that they will compel the crazed and starving to devour their own children. (Such extremity is reported by historians at diverse times in our bloodstained history.) This "startling trope" persuades Professor Boswell that practices falling "somewhere between sacrifice of children and sale" (Lot's offering of his daughters) were no less frequent in ancient Judaism than in the surrounding cultures. Was not Jesus himself a kind of foundling, whom his divine Father handed over even unto death? Could there not be some connection between archaic resonances of child sacrifice or abandonment in Judaism and the famous medieval blood libel, whereby Jews were accused of kidnapping and butchering for ritual purposes lost, orphaned, or abandoned Christian children? "Grisly pseudoreality" is Boswell's revealing formula. He adds, "There is little indication that Jews abandoned their own offspring in the High Middle Ages—although there are famous instances in which Jews killed their children to prevent their being baptized during pogroms." That "although" is a classic non sequitur. Desperate infanticide in the face of forced conversion has, of course, nothing whatever to do with child abandonment. "My computer," Boswell notes, in its search "of responsa for key words in Hebrew that might refer to abandoned children turned up no original medieval material on abandonment, only citations from Talmudic materials." One does one's best.

In Roman and Hellenistic antiquity, monitions on the matter of child abandonment bore almost exclusively on the elusive question of the free man as opposed to the slave. What Roman legislators and moralists sought to



avoid was the reduction to slave status of a child born free and abandoned or sold. Early Christianity, where it frowned upon the practice of abandonment at all, did so because immoral, irresponsible sexuality underlay the birth of the child or because the practice might multiply child prostitution and the possibility of incest. Indeed, as Boswell astutely points out, Christianity may have markedly augmented the rate of abandonment. It tightened the definitions of licit sexual intercourse and thus of bastardy and incest. Through its churches and monastic institutions, moreover, it provided a ready-made receptacle for the abandoned infant and the remitted child. "Oblation," the bestowal on a monastery or convent of one or more of one's sons or daughters, insured not only economic melioration for the family but social prestige and divine grace. Boswell's survey of this resource and the human suffocation that it often caused is masterly.

It is with the establishment and spread of foundling homes, sometime in the early thirteenth century, that "the great disjunction" comes. Now the abandoned child begins to be hidden from sight (at least, though the point is not made in the book, until the slums of the industrial revolution). In concluding pages that derive intimately from the work and vision of Foucault but have their own sombre vehemence, Boswell excoriates the illusion of progress inherent in invisibility. Behind the walls of orphanages and charitable institutions, abandonment was made a macabre mystery. The children became utter strangers to the strangers who, in metallic charity, paid for their minimal upkeep and exploitation. "Mostly they died," Boswell says.

This finding makes for a compelling coda to a formidably learned, ingenious, at times eloquent investigation. Professor Boswell is a young historian of rare force and originality. He has given voice and substance to a lost segment of humanity and shown incisively how ambiguous is the concept of progress, of hygienic rationalization in the modern and liberal vein. His tough-minded but alert resort to literary versions and his control over legal, institutional, theological records of extreme opaqueness are deeply impressive.

Why, then, as one puts down "The Kindness of Strangers," is there a malaise? Much of the material is scabrous and lurid, notably in the voluminous footnotes. (Shades of Gibbon!) But could it be otherwise? The problem may lie deeper. Choosing my words with extreme care, and with obvious respect for Boswell's achievement, I can suggest only that there attaches to this book a sheen of prurience—a suave clear-sightedness that verges on that of the voyeur. These are intimations difficult to define. They spring from tonality, from coloration, from acrobatics of surface logic. It may well and legitimately have been Professor Boswell's intent to leave his readers discomforted, but the discomfort the reader actually feels may not be altogether the one the author aimed at.

—George Steiner

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Out of This World, by Graham Swift (Poseidon; $16.95). When Robert Beech, a British arms manufacturer, decorated war veteran, and national figure, is blown up outside his home by an I.R.A. bomb hidden in his car, both his son and his granddaughter happen to be visiting. Harry, Robert's middle-aged but still rebellious son, is a famous photojournalist, stopping over on his way to Belfast. Harry's estranged daughter, Sophie, is a happy newlywed, home to announce her pregnancy to the old man who raised her. Overwhelmed, the two do not communicate again after the media-plagued funeral. Ten years later—Harry motivated by joy, Sophie by an uncontrollable fear—they separately begin to pick over their fragmentary memories of the past to salvage what may be buried there. Aerial photography, psychoanalysis, Nuremberg coverage, emigration—this novel is filled with riddles of perspective and distance, meditations on "the extraction of the world from the world." As in Mr. Swift's celebrated earlier novel, "Waterland," the insistent confessional tone is initially off-putting, but the author's fascination with the relationship between domestic and political history becomes contagious as his characters struggle to bring their family and our century into sharper focus.

Eva Luna, by Isabel Allende, translated from the Spanish by Margaret

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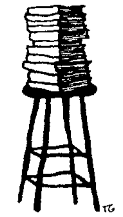

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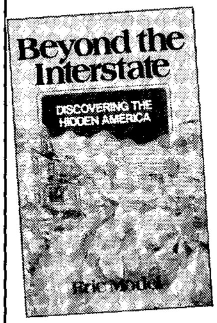

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Sayers Peden (Knopf; $18.95). This is a novel about storytelling and politics, hung on a scaffolding of melodrama and fleshed out with anthropological details of South American life among servants, whores, street people, Indians, Austrians, Palestinians, and guerrillas. Eva Luna's origins are fabulous—her mother, red-haired and white, appeared out of the jungle as an infant, alone—and Eva's childhood in various servants' quarters rivals "A Little Princess" for lush, pleasurable suffering. Everyone with whom she becomes significantly involved proves exceptional in some way that the world will take note of, going from an urchin to a commandant or from an abject male to a woman as beautiful as an archangel. Allende's heroine dumps literal and metaphorical slops on the heads of wicked functionaries of the dictatorship, but the author makes sure to shake a finger at some of the more violent champions of the downtrodden, whose leftist movements are rife with machismo, before sending Eva off to success as the writer of the tale we are reading.

THE RISK POOL, by Richard Russo (Random House; $19.95). In this mordant, very readable second novel Mr. Russo returns to the imaginary town of Mohawk, in upstate New York, where there are four seasons: Fourth of July, Mohawk Fair, Eat the Bird, and Winter. The hero and tale-teller is Ned Hall, whom we meet at age six and leave a grown man, and while Ned's story in less deft hands might fall into nostalgia and pathos Mr. Russo keeps Ned alert to and articulate about circumstances that he sees as only incidentally touching on himself. On the short list are his mother's mental disintegration, his disaster of a father—Sam Hall drinks, loses jobs, disappears, and turns up at the local bar-and-grill, in varying order—and his own peripatetic childhood. A longer list would include the ruination of a parish priest, unrequited love, the availability of parking in downtown Mohawk, and whether his mother meant to shoot his father or the side of the white convertible when she fired a revolver from the front porch. The risk pool of the title is insurance-company jargon; it refers specifically to Sam and gen-

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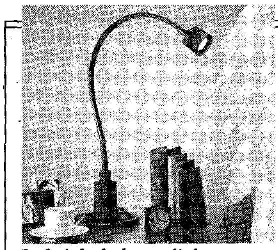

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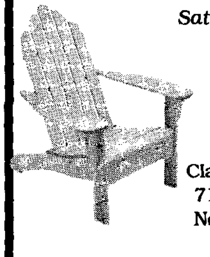

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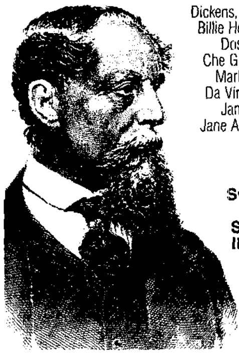

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erally to Mohawk, and also, one feels as one closes the book, to the condition of life itself.

THE RISING, by Edgar White (Marion Boyars/Kampmann; $18.95). A first novel about boyhood and youth on a Caribbean island. The boy is the great-grandson of Mother Frances, an aristocrat in island terms: having worked for years in the United States and Canada as a domestic, she has bought land; she has a house, a gardener-chauffeur, and an indoor toilet. She makes her descendants go to school. But schooling doesn't elevate Desmie, her granddaughter, or Rudie Legion, the illegitimate son Desmie produces. There is great sensual pleasure, but the implacable rules of this transitional culture are brutalizing in their effects. Education makes the inhabitants impatient with the confines of the island, and gets in the way of participating in its real life; and emigration, whether to a life of domestic servitude or to just another kind of alienation, seems a dubious good. A playwright born in the British West Indies, Edgar White has conveyed the drama of his story most beautifully in the players' speech, the music of which remains dominant.

GENERAL

DICKENS: A BIOGRAPHY, by Fred Kaplan (Morrow; $24.95). A masterly life, which takes the full measure of Charles Dickens. The son of feckless, poverty-stricken parents, Dickens was put to work in a shoe-blacking factory at twelve (a humiliation he never forgot or forgave), and at twenty-four wrote a novel—"Pickwick Papers"—that made him famous throughout the English-speaking world. Mr. Kaplan weaves through the six hundred pages of this book the interlocking histories of the manifold Dickenses embodied in one small, kinetic, dandified man: the editor and businessman; the creator of immortal literary characters; the steadfast friend and bon vivant; the performer who gave thousands of readings of his works; the political and social reformer; the international celebrity; the father and the country gentleman; and, finally, the towering egotist. After ten years of research, Mr. Kaplan is able to go more deeply than other biographers have gone into Dickens'

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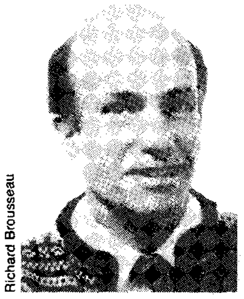

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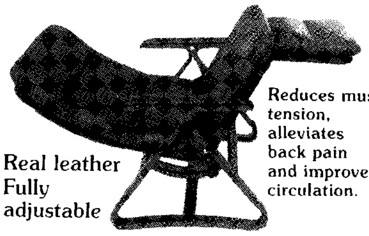

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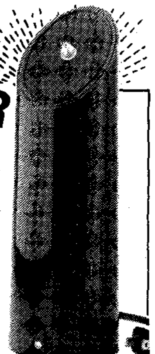

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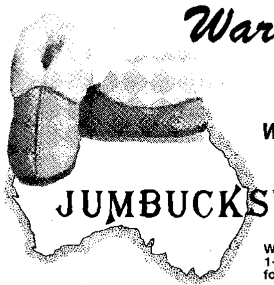

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vexed marriage to Catherine Hogarth—"as miserable a one as ever was," he called it—and his clandestine alliance with Ellen Ternan. Right through to the end, we feel we've been in the audience at a great, untidy drama. Many photographs.

IN BROAD DAYLIGHT, by Harry N. MacLean (Harper & Row; $18.95). On a July morning in 1981, a man named Ken Rex McElroy was shot and killed as he sat in his pickup truck on the main street of Skidmore, Missouri, a town of about four hundred and fifty inhabitants. More than forty people were in the street at the time, but they all claimed to have seen nothing; after numerous investigations, including one by the F.B.I., the matter rests there. This book tells us why. McElroy, the illiterate son of a tenant farmer, was a hog-and-cattle thief who over the years had terrorized Skidmore and the surrounding countryside. He had been charged with more than twenty crimes, from arson to rape and attempted murder, but, thanks to a slick lawyer, had never spent more than a day or two in jail. Mr. MacLean gives us a gripping circumstantial account of the affair, and a harsh examination of its implications, the most disturbing of which is the breakdown not only of the legal system but also of popular reliance on the law for protection. Photographs.

JERUSALEM ON EARTH: PEOPLE, PASSIONS, AND POLITICS IN THE HOLY CITY, by Abraham Rabinovich (Free Press; $19.95). The author is a feature writer for the Jerusalem *Post*, and these attractive sketches describe daily life in Jerusalem today. Not surprisingly, a good many chapters deal with religion and religious sects, and one of the author's points is that since 1967 the city's goal has been not to integrate the population of the city but, rather, to find ways to allow the assortment of creeds and ethnic groups, cultures and subcultures to feel comfortable in their separate identities and neighborhoods. Mr. Rabinovich does not argue that this solution is a model; he simply tries to show how it works—or did work, until the Palestinian uprising that began a year ago. Another theme is the struggle to modernize a city that is not only holy but ancient and historic. The author discusses disagreements among architects, planners, and developers, and, with the clarity of a good writer, helps us visualize both the cityscape and the perplexities it poses.

ANSEL ADAMS: LETTERS AND IMAGES, 1916-1984, edited by Mary Street Alinder and Andrea Gray Stillman (New York Graphic Society/Little, Brown; $50). When Ansel Adams died, in 1984 at eighty-two, he left behind not only a huge photographic archive (over forty thousand negatives) but also a vast body of correspondence that reflected his ebullient personality, his commitment to artistic quality, and his love of life. From that, the letters in this book were selected. There are discussions with fellow-photographers like Edward Weston and Alfred Stieglitz of philosophical and aesthetic aspects of their art; messages to family members from Yosemite, New York, Hawaii; impromptu screeds to friends, full of puns and jokes and corny misspellings. On a more sombre note, there are impassioned letters, written in his latter years, rallying others to the struggle against the exploiters and despoilers of the natural treasures that he celebrated in his photographs. Illustrated with casual shots as well as some of Adams' finest prints.

NOTE: "War and Peace in the Nuclear Age," by John Newhouse, has been published by Knopf ($22.95). Some of the contents first appeared in *The New Yorker*. . . . Eva Hoffman's memoir, "Lost in Translation: A Life in a New Language," has been published by Dutton ($18.95). Some of the contents originally appeared here.

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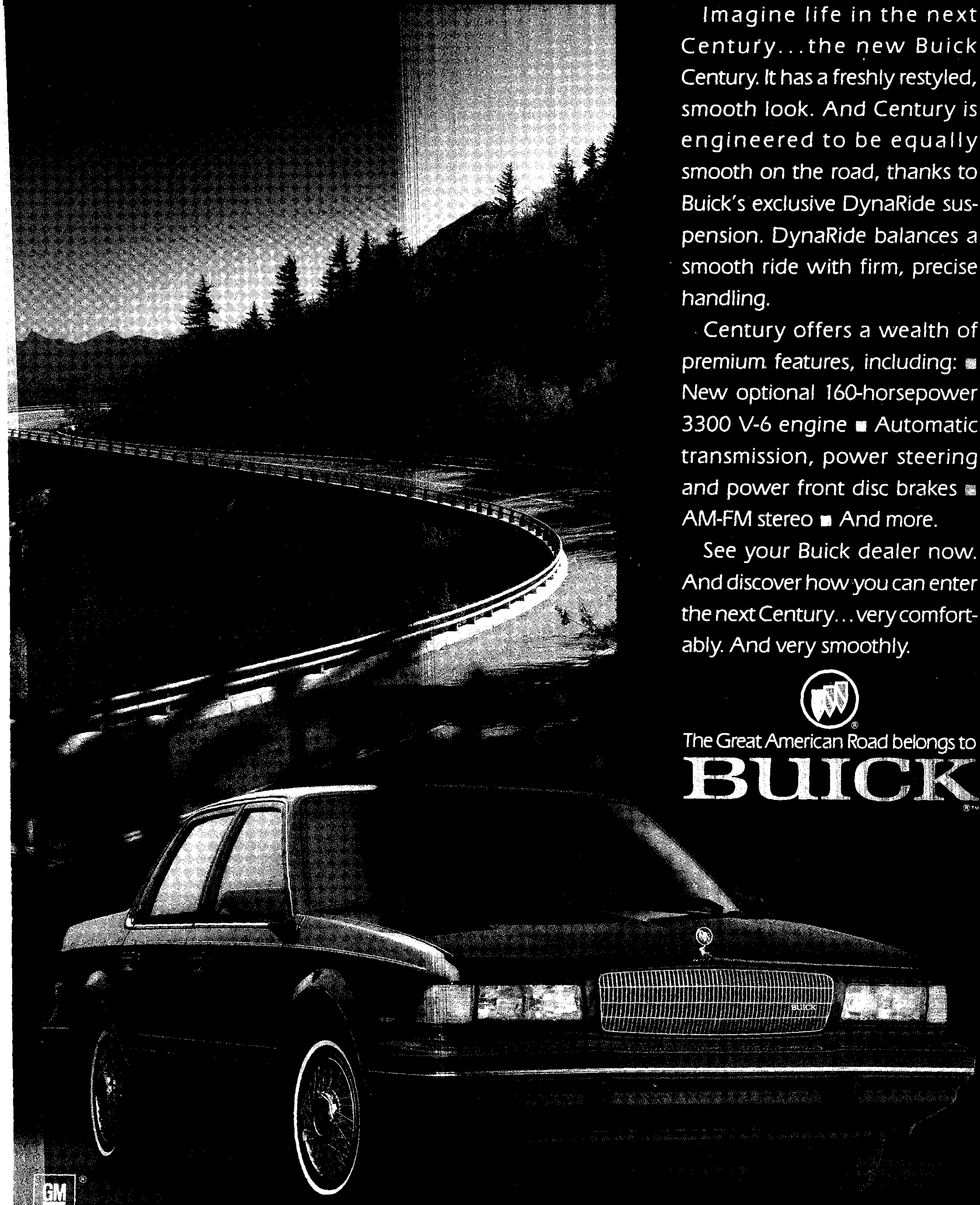

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